

A FAITH-BASED AFRICAN AMERICAN
NETWORK FOR VIOLENCE
FREE RELATIONSHIPS

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ABSTRACT

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The objective of this Model in Ministry was to establish a network of secular and faith leaders, engaging domestic violence prevention and intervention within the context of religious practice and community outreach. Through action research, members were identified and motivated to become a network which during regular meetings engaged in mission identification, visioning, creating research tools, knowledge transfer and market branding. An *African American Network for Violence Free Relationships* was established, formalized through name, mission, vision, logo, educational seminars for faith and community participants, and promises significant contributions to a culture of diminished violence and increased peace in the community.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I am one of the most blessed persons I know. Many friends, family and colleagues have taken this journey with me. I am so thankful for all of you. Dr. Sharon Ellis Davis thank you for your vision made concrete during the United Theological Seminary (UTS) D. Min. program, your brilliance shining on a dark and deadly subject and your grace extended to an aging stumbling student wanting to be a doctor of the church.

Thank you to Ruth Slaughter my first mentor in the field of domestic violence advocacy and a Sister-friend who prays for me when I cannot pray for myself.

Thank you Carol Williams, who is both my family and CEO of Interval House. You and my Interval House family—my co-workers, the clients, and the board of directors have made this journey possible with your support, encouragement, untold access to resources over the years for the CASE Interfaith Project, and now, the African American Network for Violence Free Relationships.

Thank you, members of the Network; we will press on for a culture of peace in our families, communities and churches. Thank you Chi, my context associates, my professional associates and Oliver Williams for the inspiration of IDVAAC.

Thank you Bishop Mary Anne Swenson for the opportunity to do an Extension Ministry of the United Methodist Church at Interval House Centers for Victims of Domestic Violence.

Rev. Dr. Kathey Wilborn, Rev. Cherrye Cunnigan, Dr. Gayle Parker, Dr. Lauren Walton and Rev. Arnetha Inge for your generous gifts of time, counsel, skill and support.

Last, but by no means the least, my Walton family. We all came from the same amazing parents—Mack and Larnell—we are truly blessed. It is through their faith and prayers that I claim the right to also be a child of God.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to Interval House Crisis Shelters for Victims of Domestic Violence and the women and children who have renewed lives because they were able to find safety, respect and peace for an *interval*.

ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ANFVR | African American Network for Violence Free Relationships |
| CASE | Creating A Safe Environment Project |
| DV | Domestic Violence |
| IPV | Intimate Partner Violence |
| NRSV | New Revised Standard Version |
| UCC | United Church of Christ |
| NCADV | National Coalition Against Domestic Violence |
| UMC | United Methodist Church |

ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure

1. Definitions Of Family Violence
2. Violence Iceberg

In the middle of a still autumn night, I heard a woman's scream. It sounded like it was some distance from the house where I was living, but still I recognized it was a woman's scream. The sound triggered a flash back for me. I had heard women scream in the night when I was a child, but I had not recalled those experiences in more than twenty years. The sounds I had heard as a child were from women being beaten on hot summer nights by drunken husbands. Usually these situations occurred when the men received their vacation pay from the coal mining company which literally owned our little village. What is significant about these memories is that I did not have a name for the screams and the violence I heard when I was a child. If you could not name it, did it really exist? It was not until the autumn night—when I heard the screams as an adult—that I became aware that what happened when I was a child did have a name. It was domestic violence between husbands and wives. I was horrified to realize that even though I had been working for about two years for a domestic violence shelter, I had suppressed this particular memory from my childhood. What was even more troubling, is that several of those women I heard screaming as a child were eventually murdered by their spouses—and one woman killed her husband in self-defense.

These memories were the beginning of my analysis of the problem of domestic violence in general, in the African American community in particular, and among African American people of faith specifically. I am profoundly troubled when I realize that each time a Black man in my little village was violent with his wife to the extent that law enforcement had to be called in, the attorneys for these men always called my father, the Baptist pastor, to serve as a character witness at the trials—even the murder trials. Each time, my father testified on behalf of these men and sometimes they got off with only probation. One man, who got probation for assaulting his wife, later stabbed her to death. I now know that my father, who was an upright man of God, and never touched my mother in an unkind way, was wrong about the way he handled this issue.

Many pastors, of every race and every denomination have been as guilty as my father was of perpetuating mortal risk for women in relationships with violent men. These preachers have been silent; they have not held batterers accountable according to Holy Scripture or secular law; they have not been knowledgeable enough about the injustice and sin of relationship violence to counsel victim or perpetrator.

—Mary Walton, October 1979

INTRODUCTION

The primary researcher for this ministry project—A Faith-based African American Network for Violence Free Relationships—has reflected upon an autobiographical narrative revealing sexual and domestic violence in her family and community of origin. The head of her family of origin was also the pastor of the local Black Baptist Church. The ministry context for this ministry project is known as an Extension Ministry of the Long Beach, California District of the United Methodist Church and is called Creating A Safe Environment (CASE) Interfaith Project. The primary activity of CASE is preventing and intervening of domestic violence via outreach to and education of the African American faith community and its leaders.

Such reflection contributed strength, validity and purpose to the author's decision to utilize the CASE Interfaith Project as a doctoral project from which to develop emergent leadership and ministry in the Black church and in the community. The project will contribute to domestic violence prevention and intervention and the creation of a culture of peace in the African American community. It is pertinent to clarify that emphasis is being placed on the *Black Church* because it has a unique, critical, and historical role in the life of the African American community and the life of the primary researcher.

Raised from infancy in the Black Baptist denomination, the researcher has been blessed to experience not only the worst of organized religion in her tradition, but also the

best. Grounded in solid values and morals from her parents and good adult teachers and mentors in the church, the researcher was able to be the first female in her family to complete college and pursue a professional career—initially in social work. More recently the researcher has responded to the sacred call to the ordained ministry of the United Methodist Denomination. As a clinical social worker, the researcher considered her work a sacred commitment to clients as diverse as the community's poorest, the mentally ill, the developmentally disabled, substance addicted, HIV/AIDS affected and for the past 35 years, victims of sexual and domestic violence. In terms of the failure of the church, the researcher was a child victim of rape and sexual assault and as a young woman, suffered from depression and suicidal ideation. She could not turn to the church for help and the unspoken message was that these situations she had experienced were unspeakable. The researcher knew firsthand the impact of the church's sin by silence. It is her determination and commitment that the silence of sexual and domestic/intimate partner violence be broken and that faith leaders and the ministry of pastors be transformed through the acquisition of knowledge and skills to prevent DV/IPV and intervene on behalf of victims and perpetrators of this sin and crime.

In Chapter One, Ministry Focus, there is a discussion of the unacceptable levels of interpersonal violence in the African American community, description of the researcher's past efforts to bring about systemic change in regard to this behavior; and the rationale for employing a different and nuanced strategy in hopes of creating a model for change which can be utilized by secular and faith-based institutions for peacemaking.

During the past thirty five years, efforts to provide protection for women and child victims of domestic violence have ranged from establishing the first domestic

violence shelters in this country, to broad based funding from states, federal entities, private foundations and community based resources.

Chapter Two is focused on the interplay of fiscal resources, knowledge base and domestic violence victim assistance program structures as it highlights the state of the art practices from a ministry perspective. The irony of domestic violence ministry is that the phenomenon of domestic/intimate partner violence has been acted out for millennia, but proactive and responsive ministry is relatively new, as is any discussion of state of the art practices in this area.

Why is there such a discrepancy between the longstanding gender violence and abuse and the minimal response of the institutional church or faith traditions to those victims who have suffered centuries of bodily, emotional and spiritual injury and death?

Chapter Three explores in depth theoretical bases and possible answers to such a question. The researcher will hypothesize that historical, biblical and theological underpinnings of patriarchal and gender-violence against women has given rise to a sexist, racist, classist hermeneutics among religious leaders and scholars, a dynamic of power and domination in most cultures of the world and within the primary institutions in our community. The findings in this chapter suggest radical acts of deconstruction and transformation of domination constructs—biblically and culturally based; and equally radical acts of prophetic agency born out of Christ's love ethic.

How does the Black church and secular allies go about the processes of reconstruction and transformation for the creation of peaceful loving communities?

Chapter Four lays out the methodology of action research not only as method, but as the ministry strategy that best brings about relief to those suffering from violence at

many levels in the African American community and healing of cultural, spiritual, emotional, sexual and physical trauma.

Chapter Five, the field experience, reveals the challenges, failures and triumphs of establishing a faith informed network for violence free relationships. The activity begun in January of 2009 and a milestone achieved in October of 2009 reveals the level of commitment, the diversity of community, the sharing of gifts, and the passion for peace and love present in the African American community. The activity described in this chapter will also demonstrate the efficacy of action research and transformational learning as valid strategies for communities seeking to be relevant, developing emergent leadership and valuing ethical accountability.

The concluding Chapter of this document shares the reflections of the researcher and others in the network. The purpose of this ministry project is to make available to the community and the church a model that can easily be replicated in terms of concrete steps to follow. The passion that keeps one keeping on is rooted in one's faith and the gift of God's grace. This ministry is an open-ended project which hopefully will continue until the vision and mission of the network is fulfilled.

CHAPTER ONE

MINISTRY FOCUS

The Faces of Violence

In 2002, in suburban Orange County California, Thomas Lewis Turner shot and killed his wife and his 15-year-old nephew. He then wounded his 22 month-old daughter before turning the gun on himself in the family's Lake Forest, California home.

In 2006 during Domestic Violence Awareness month, a local African American congregation had a *Teen Dating Violence and Abuse Workshop: From Abusive to Healthy Relationships*. Three years later, the pastor of that church was placed under a five year restraining order for battering his girlfriend.

In 2003 an eleven year old girl was sexually molested in the Pastor's study of her church by the pastor's 19 year old son. The Bishop of the denomination wanted the child to repent in front of the congregation, and at the trial, numerous members of the congregation showed up to support the young man. Today that girl—traumatized by the rape, the church and the court—is now a young woman selling herself on the streets of San Diego.

In the 1990's, an African American chief of police of a major city was mentor to a pre-teen boy when the chief was accused of battering his girlfriend, and his former wife revealed she had also been abused by him. The officer was not charged, the allegation persisted and the chief resigned and moved on to another city. The boy he was mentoring

is now in prison for assault and kidnapping. The girl molested in the church, and the boy mentored by the police chief is the niece and nephew of the researcher.

In March 2010, a pastor in Gardena, California was shot and killed by police as he chased his wife down city streets, shooting her several times and critically wounding her.

Among the battered women in a Southern California shelter, one woman was beaten by her husband with a large stone and left for dead. Her pastor had counseled her to improve as a wife saying that the violence would then stop. The now ex-husband is serving a twenty-five year prison sentence for attempted murder.

A young woman sought shelter because her lesbian partner was stalking and trying to kill her. The partner even held her at gunpoint at her job in a high profile department store, but was able to elude security and escape. This young woman's sister referred her for shelter because their mother refused to have her in the house. The sister quoted the mother as saying, "give me an alcoholic, a junkie, give me a daughter with AIDS, but I will not have an abomination in my house." The victim was the youngest of many siblings but the family home was only occupied by the parents.

Another local church was progressive enough to have their church leadership including the pastor, trained and certified to be domestic violence advocates and established a domestic violence ministry. Three years later that congregation is in disarray as the pastor is under charges for embezzling millions from the church (spiritual abuse).

The face of the researcher for this study of sexual and domestic violence is the face of an eight year old girl who was raped and repeatedly molested over a period of

time by a sixteen year old boy who lived next door. Fear, ignorance, shame and guilt prevented the researcher from telling anyone about this trauma until she was a young adult, college graduate and away from the community of her youth. The researcher in retrospect realized there was no justice for victims of sexual violence in her village—only shame and a reputation that she was easy prey for men and boys in a coal mining town that kept no secrets. Her trauma was magnified by her being the daughter of the Baptist pastor and the expectation to be a perfect child. The researcher now has an opportunity to redeem that traumatic experience and transform it into knowledge and experience to be shared with the community.

The sexual violence in her community and the behavior of the researcher's father/pastor as described in the epigraph to this study are being redeemed and transformed through the researcher not only being advocate and activist for victims of gender-based violence, but she is also a pastor who has had and will have the opportunity to teach men and increase their awareness of violence against women and their responsibility to work to end sexual and intimate partner violence.

The interpersonal violence in the Black community has many faces—women, men, children, young adults, the elderly, the poor, the rich, the educated, the religious, the less educated, the physically infirm, the emotionally unstable, the mentally ill, the gay, lesbian and transgendered, and the mixed race. It also includes immigrants, criminals, institutions, cultural traditions, sexism, racism, classism, homophobia, heterosexism, and economic oppression. The diversity and complexity of violence does not obscure the pain and suffering and the risks posed for the future of the community. There must be intervention, but it is only through careful, community driven, community owned,

sensitive, contextual analysis that activist even begin to know where to intervene, how and when.

Instruments of Peace

In a position of authority as a clergyperson in the Church and having experienced healing, insight and wholeness as a survivor of sexual violence, the researcher is focused on being an instrument of peace and contributing to a culture of peace in the African American home and community.

The Black church continues to be the primary conduit through which one approaches large numbers of people in the African American community. That institution still wields the greatest influence in initiating ethical, moral, social and political change, foundational to the progress and evolvement of the African American community. Therefore pastors and church leaders are among the primary power brokers through which one has access to the people. Given the silence of the church regarding sexual and domestic violence, this strategy may seem irrational and even undeserved, but it is the reality. If the CASE Interfaith Project wanted to reach the people, its leadership and constituents needed to develop liberative pedagogical skill, sharpen a prophetic edge, and allow privilege and enhanced awareness to deepen the love for their African American sisters and brothers.

Vision and Motivation

What motivated the researcher—the CASE Director—are the powerful lessons of a youth with the rich legacy of parental example and a coal mining community's will to survive and thrive in the middle of economic oppression and racism. The researcher is

empowered by both past and present and has taken the privilege, the hope, the nurture, the moral and work ethics with which one has been blessed, and is sharing these blessings with men, women and children encountered in need and in bondage. Because of being positioned professionally in a place to witness firsthand the tragedy of family violence, the researcher's vision for spiritual and social transformation has to do with halting and reversing the downward spiral of violence and abuse within the family, and the myriad social and community problems contributing to and emanating from the cycles of intimate partner violence and abuse.

Providentially, the researcher has been placed strategically in areas where the work of an advocate can be a catalyst for life changing/life saving ministry in both the church and a secular organization. The researcher's current employment/work as clergy and social worker has garnered the privilege of partnering the church and a domestic violence shelter to implement an aggressive program in awareness, intervention and prevention of domestic violence in the African American community.

Subsequently, the work and the vision become a quest for both transformative strategies and a just peace at some very basic levels. The more work done with families impacted by this violence, the more apparent become the connections to many other situations which converge to destroy the quality and promise of life in the beloved community. Economic, racial, gender, political, religious, cultural and sexual oppression can and does manifest as violence against women, men, children, and the family unit. Oppression and abuse stifles opportunity and growth at personal and communal levels. The CASE vision for social, emotional, and spiritual transformation for individuals and communities is to challenge and defeat oppression in all its guises and to be in solidarity

with others who have the same or similar visions for the transformation of our world into the Reign of God.

It was the researcher's leadership and vision to have Interval House Crisis Shelters in partnership with a United Methodist Shalom ministry to create a model of domestic violence intervention and prevention in the African American community via the Black Church. This is a program of community development of:

1. A consciousness about domestic violence as a destructive phenomena to the community, church, families and individuals;
2. The courage to break the silence of male privilege and domination which has often been fostered by the church;
3. A vision to create a culture of peace in our families and communities, which challenges racism, sexism and many of our societal institutions.

For shelters and the traditionally conservative faith community to work together is innovative and challenging in itself. For the Black church to work with a non-Black, feminist/womanist oriented organization is even more challenging. CASE has come a long way toward succeeding in the partnership and all have broken new ground in the struggle.

The domestic violence ministry as initiated, met with resistance from the African American male clergy, yet experienced important successes among laity and the general community. Existing research is filled with examples of model outreach and educational programs that address domestic violence. Many theories identifying the sources of domestic and community violence are then applied to racial/ethnic minority cultures. The work of CASE suggests, however, that when it comes to reaching African Americans a new paradigm may be needed. More specifically, there is a need to intervene in holistic

ways that may involve non-traditional outreach methods, including more effective use of faith-based interventions.

Creating A Safe Environment project utilized a community-level intervention model to address domestic violence within the African-American community. Findings from the project suggest that a collective response based on community members and institutional buy-in are crucial in efforts to end domestic violence. When thinking about domestic violence in the context of African American lives, there must be attention paid to the whole person—including race, gender, culture, sexuality, environment and spirituality. The CASE project illustrates that it is not enough to have resources in the community if the community's leaders do not support or encourage use. The project also demonstrates that the one of the strongest weapons in the prevention of domestic violence can be one's faith community. Through use of a network of community members, supportive faith-based leaders and organizational partnership, CASE was able to increase community awareness of domestic violence, engage the community through monetary incentives in outreach efforts, and create tangible behavior change among limited numbers of faith-based leaders.

However, much more must be done by many more. Both the researcher and other key community and faith leaders' tasks and energy in this ministry project are to become individually and collectively more dynamic and prophetic. Increased energy and resources will enable the creation of more inclusivity in this community—forging the spiritual flank of a movement to transform clergy colleagues through preaching, teaching, writing, researching issues of how we live together in love as members of the human family and the African American church and community. Faith Leaders and domestic

violence advocates must collaborate to create and foster a culture of peace, and in doing so, come out of the church closet and let people see what transformed and set free by a liberative and inclusive hermeneutic of the Gospel looks like and acts like.

An area of special interest to the researcher, after many years of practice, is also how one passes on what one knows and has accomplished in a way that creates and nurtures new and or emerging leadership in the church and the community. The need for converting such reflection to action is urgent for the church and also for the domestic violence movement as the researcher has experienced it as an African American advocate and pastor. To lend substance to reflection, the researcher and several colleagues have conceptualized a network of men and women dedicated to creating a culture of peace in the African American community and families. They were inspired by the March 2007 National Conference of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community.¹

At that 2007 conference, more than forty men and women of faith from one city—Tacoma, Washington—stepped beyond the church walls to gain insight, awareness and information on how to confront domestic violence in their churches and community. Additionally, there was standing room only in a workshop on *Faith-based Approaches to Addressing Domestic Violence*, in a room designed to hold sixty people. The researcher was one of the facilitators of that workshop and that experience affirmed a God-sent vision to take the CASE ministry to the community in a more dynamic and inclusive interfaith fashion.

¹The Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community (IDVAC) 2007 Conference, <http://www.dvinstiute.org> (accessed 02.15.10).

The challenge was to be able to generate a similar level of pastoral and community concern for individuals and families impacted by domestic violence in the greater Long Beach, South Los Angeles, and Orange County California area. It was the intention of CASE Interfaith Project, lead by the action researcher to provide didactic and transformational learning opportunities for faith leaders and congregations who were willing to commit themselves to the prevention, intervention and end of domestic violence in the African American Community. This learning/teaching process was envisioned as the intersection of the following:

1. Personal experiences of domestic and sexual abuse and violence;
2. Deconstructed and reconstructed interpretation of Biblical sources related to intimate partner violence and family life;
3. Skills in how to identify and utilize community resources; basic pastoral care and counseling techniques;
4. Identifying dynamics of sexism, racism, and class issues related to domestic violence and;
5. Formulation and advocacy for progressive denominational doctrine and public policy around domestic violence issues.

All who were willing to take on this challenge would have the full services of Interval House Crisis Shelters at their disposal for crisis intervention, victim advocacy and follow-up.

The primary researcher has a view of ministry that is both theological and practical—with that practical lens having been sharpened by years of professional work as a social worker done with sacred commitment. The researcher's theological lens is that of a Black African American child of God, womanist/feminist, with a loving progressive Christian orientation.

CHAPTER TWO

THE STATE OF THE ART IN THIS MINISTRY MODEL

This chapter focuses on the interplay of fiscal resources, knowledge base and domestic violence victim assistance program structures as it highlights the state of the art practices from a professional advocacy and ministry perspective. The irony of domestic violence ministry is that the phenomenon of domestic/intimate partner violence has been acted out for millennia, but proactive and responsive ministry is relatively new, as is any discussion of the state of the art practices for this ministry model.

Why is there such a discrepancy between the longstanding gender violence and abuse, and the minimal response of the institutional church or faith traditions to those victims who have suffered centuries of bodily, emotional and spiritual injury and death? The church is not alone in its years of silence and neglect. Before the 1970s there was only one domestic violence assistance program in the United States. That program was a residence for women and children battered by husband/fathers who were abusive alcoholics. The women who established this residence in 1965 were all from Al-Anon and had themselves been battered. The house they used was condemned in 1969 and in 1970 a benefactor purchased a property for them and a professional social worker was hired to put together the first formal program and residence open to the public; funded by the County of Los Angeles Alcohol Rehabilitation funds; and the project was called Haven House. The executive director just happened to be African American.

In 1975 the researcher obtained employment with Haven House and has worked in the field of domestic violence (DV) victim assistance until the present. Since the researcher has been on the front lines of this movement, there has been an opportunity to observe the growth of programs and written information over this thirty-five year period.

In terms of funding for DV programs, the state of California was the first to pass a law in 1982 appending a five dollar surcharge on marriage licenses and the revenue was to be used for battered women shelters. Federal funding was made available in 1986 through the Justice Department's Victims of Crime Act. Funding has increased exponentially throughout the country until the current recession occurred.

Advocacy and help for victims was primarily emergency shelter in DV residential facilities with anonymity of location being critical for safety of victims and staff. The shelter concept and the programs designed for women and children while at the shelter were diverse and trial and error, since no one had done this work before. The establishment of these centers of peace and safety were self-motivated primarily by women who were survivors or feminists. There was no institutional mandate for these safety nets from government, faith, education, law enforcement, or criminal justice. All that was obtained was done through tremendous struggle, commitment and persistence.

Along with this grass roots movement, some academics began to gather information and do research to create a knowledge basis for this newly named phenomena—battered women syndrome/domestic violence. Among those early researchers were Lenora Walker, Mildred Pagelow, Susan Schecter, Murray Straus, and Richard Gellis to name a few. The University of Texas at Austin began to compile a DV bibliography in the 1980s and is still a gold mine of information in this discipline.

In the late 1970s, battered women's advocates and shelter providers began to talk with one another and organize for solidarity and resources for these self-sustaining organizations they were managing. This brought about local coalitions as well as the birth of the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence (NCADV). While all of this was happening, the church was mostly silent. One voice stood out and above—Faith Trust Institute, which was formerly known in the 1970s—2000s as The Center for the Prevention of Sexual and Domestic Violence in Seattle, Washington and founded by Rev. Dr. Marie Fortune of the United Church of Christ denomination.

In 1982, the researcher met Marie Fortune at a national conference sponsored by NCADV in Milwaukee. That conference had a religious fervor for attendees who were meeting kindred spirits from all over the country. There was a representation of Black women raising the issues of the African American community and the lack of resources and Black women stuck at entry level jobs in the local DV shelters. "Sweet Honey and the Rock" is an African American female a cappella vocal group whose founder, Bernice Reagon had been a student non-violent activist during the civil rights struggles of the 1960s. These women provided entertainment and tips on how to organize an antiviolence movement as well as an affirmation of Black women's right to resist sexual and domestic violence. After that event, articles written by Black advocates and survivors began to show up in White feminist publications, but still very little from the faith community and nothing from the African American faith community.

In 1985 Interval House Shelter was approached by a Presbyterian clergywoman and pastor wanting to volunteer—to do a support group for the residents. She explained that she had just gotten her Ph.D. in Pastoral Care and Counseling and her doctoral

dissertation was being published as *Pastoral Care of Battered Women*. The author, Rita Lou Clarke conducted a support group for the women at Interval House for several years, reinforcing the researcher's belief that there was an important role for the church to play in stopping domestic violence and providing care for the victim. In 1987 Rev. Marie Fortune published a little paperback book entitled, *Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse*. This book was small—not quite 4" by 6" and easy to conceal for a woman in danger. It posed and answered the questions that many battered women of faith may have had for years. However, it may not have resonated with women in the Black church because of the difference in cultures, language and access to the book. That early edition of *Keeping the Faith* is no longer in print, but there is an expanded version published in 1995, with answers to questions which victims, pastors and counselors may have for those persons of faith confronting the violence in their lives.¹

In Seattle, a feminist publishing company—Seal Press—published a book in 1986 by an African American journalist, Evelyn White, *Chain Chain Change: For Black Women Dealing with Physical and Emotional Abuse*. Later White edited *The Black Women's Health Book: Speaking for Ourselves and a new expanded edition of Chain Chain Changed*. These books were like gold for African American women working with victims and with their own physical, mental and spiritual wholeness. *Chain Chain Changed* in particular is addressed to the battered woman. Her introduction is a personal and poignant account of her response to the murder of a dear friend by an intimate

¹Marie M. Fortune, *Keeping the Faith: Guidance for Christian Women Facing Abuse* (San Francisco, CA: Harper Collins, 1995).

partner.² The remainder of this book is White having a conversation with all Black women—including lesbians readers, as well as a counseling session in which information about every aspect of getting free of an abusive relationship is introduced and defined from how to know if you are in an abusive relationship to how it is possible to live and love yourself freely.

Also in 1986, Robert L. Hampton, edited a collection of articles and essays stimulated by the United States Secretary of Health and Human Services Task Force Report on Black and Minority Health. Hampton's book, *Violence in the Black Family: Correlates and Consequences*, focused on many aspects of violence, including domestic, family violence and homicide, which confronted and compromised health and safety of African Americans. This collection of essays points to the relationship among the various manifestations of violence impacting the African American family and community. The contributors are professionals from various disciplines and institutions, but absent among the contributors to this discourse are the leaders of the Black church. It is unknown if this is by design of the Task Force or the possibility that the institutional church was silent then.

The last half of the 1980 decade produced another trend related to gender violence in women's lives—writing by womanist scholars and educators in the nation's seminaries. Rev. Dr. Renita Weems authored, *Just a Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible* in 1988. Weems' book was a new take on women in scripture who we now know were under the dominance and control of a legalistic, patriarchal culture and society. Weems' work addressed females in scripture, among

²Evelyn C. White, *Chain Chain Change: For Black Women in Abusive Relationships*, (Seattle., WA: Seal Press, 1994), xi- xvi.

whom were Hagar, Ruth and Naomi, Jephthah's daughter, Vashti, Esther, Lot's wife and her daughters.³ The approach taken involved looking at the scriptures through the lens of womanist hermeneutics rather than patriarchal male authors and redactors. In relation to the ethical failure and challenges for the church when confronted with sexual and domestic violence, womanist/feminist theologians and ethicists writing began to prolifically break the silence of misogyny and privilege. Authors such as Delores Williams, Katie Cannon, Bell Hooks, and Emilie Towns were opening doors that had been closed for centuries.

The researcher's criticism of these writings, with the exception of White and Fortune is that they are written in the language of intellectuals and clinicians rather than language and information creating escape vehicles for the average Black woman trapped in the cycle of domestic violence. A positive aspect of their work is that it lays the foundation for ethical, theoretical and philosophical considerations in the transforming and prophetic work of the African American church, seminaries and community. White's work in *Chain Chain Changed* is a powerful and practical guide, even today, for a Black woman in an abusive relationship. Both White and Fortune wrote books that are equally helpful to advocates, pastors and other providers of care for battered women.

In terms of what was written that is most pertinent to this study and ministry project, several authors stand out—Toinette Eugene, Marie Fortune, Tracie West, Monica Coleman, Catherine Clark Kroeger and Al Miles. These authors' works contribute to the body of knowledge that will bring about transformation for individuals, families and communities experiencing the negative impact of intimate partner violence.

³Renita J. Weems, *Just A Sister Away: A Womanist Vision of Women's Relationships in the Bible* (San Diego, CA: Lura Media, 1988).

Toinette Eugene and James Poling co-authored *Balm for Gilead: Pastoral Care for African American Families Experiencing Abuse*. Balm for Gilead is one of the most complete and balanced works on family violence in the African American community. The authors take the reader from the inhumane trauma of Black slavery in the United States of America through most aspects of sexual and intimate partner violence, community and institutional violence, breakdown of ethics and values, the failure of the church to fulfill its role of caring and serving to *Ethical Insights That Address Roots of Violence in the African American Community*.

- The first ethical insight is a call to renew faith as both belief and action.
- The second ethical insight is the restoration of self-respect as an indispensable element in our abilities to conquer the environment of violence in the black community.
- The third ethical insight calls for transformation of social structures that manifest sin.
- The fourth and final ethical insight calls for an inclusive ethic of black Christian love for all individuals and congregations, regardless of the conditions of birth, sexual preference, or previous engagement in expressions of domestic violence either as an abuser or a victim.⁴

Violence against Women and Children: A Christian Theological Sourcebook was edited by Marie Fortune and Carol Adams and gives voice to thirty-one men and women of faith and academia, breaking the silence about sexual and domestic violence in the Christian church.

Traci West, an ordained elder in UMC, has an essay in *Domestic Violence at the Margins: Readings on Race, Class, Gender and Culture*, “Sustaining an Ethic of

⁴Toinette Eugene and James Newton Poling, *Balm for Gilead: Pastoral Care for African American Families Experiencing Abuse* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998).

Resistance against Domestic Violence in Black Faith-Based Communities.” This is an abridged version of the essay, but West challenges the local black church to become community activists against the injustice of domestic violence and the people involved. West has very high expectations of the church in the model she presents and also an expectation that survivors and others in the community—churched or not—will be partners.⁵ It would appear that her perception of the ethical failure of the Black Church is an idea whose time has arrived—at least in relation to this researcher’s study apropos the mission and vision of ANFVR.

Rev. Al Miles, a chaplain at Queen’s Medical Center in Hawaii broke the silence among African American male clergy with the publication of *Domestic Violence, What Every Pastor Needs to Know*. This book contains stories of Christian women and their batterers and their pastors. It is a book that highlights some of the basics that pastors need to know and it assures victims that it is not God’s intent that they should stay in abusive marriages. In spite of Al Miles being African American, the book does not focus on the African American church or community, but tends to be more generic rather than culture specific.

Dr. Catherine Kroeger, and a host of others stepped out of an Evangelical closet with, *Women, Abuse, and the Bible: How Scripture Can Be Used to Hurt or to Heal*. Kroeger contributed to this collection of articles and was also one of the editors. This work creatively presents scriptures that heal and have been used to hurt abused women. Kroeger has been a pioneer in the evangelical tradition, founding Christians for Biblical

⁵ Traci C. West, “Sustaining as Ethic of Resistance against Domestic Violence in Black Faith-Based Communities,” in *Domestic Violence at the Margins: Readings On Race, Class, Gender, and Culture*, edited by Natalie J. Sokoloff, with Christina Pratt (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2007), 340-49.

Equality and President of Peace and Safety in the Christian Home (PASCH); an international coalition of men and women promoting peace and safety in Christian homes. *Woman Abuse and the Bible*, was perhaps more helpful to Black victims, clergy and faith leaders than the work by Al Miles—due in part to the institutional Black church being more theologically conservative and the importance of more literal interpretation of scripture.

Finally Dr. Monica Coleman's autobiographical work, *The Dinah Project: A Handbook for Congregational Response to Sexual Violence*, is an amazing gift to victims and to the church. Dr. Coleman opens to all, her experience of rape within the walls of the church—from pain, loss, shame and grief to healing and activism.⁶ The prototype for a congregation to break the silence about rape and to initiate a place within its walls and campus for response to sexual assault is contained within the pages of this book. Additionally, a theology of healing and wholeness—transformation is made available through this book.⁷

Much is being written within the faith context about domestic and sexual violence. However, there remains a need for action, transformational experiences, and step by step strategies to bring together the faith community and the rest of the African American community to create a culture of peace and love where there has been violence trauma and injustice.

⁶Monica A. Coleman, *The Dinah Project: A Handbook for Congregational Response to Sexual Violence* (Cleveland, OH: The Pilgrim Press, 2004), 98-101.

⁷Ibid., 110-169.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS

Historical Foundation

Confronting sexual and domestic violence (DV) in the African American community is a very complex task which challenges assumptions, tests patience and faith. Most who have answered the call to assist victims and their families, have been predominately female and members of secular social service institutions. When one reflects analytically about domestic violence and about the African American community, the faith/church connection looms large, as does the task of conscientizing the faith community to the issue of domestic violence.

In the first half of the 1980s decade, domestic violence victim advocates began observing October as Domestic Violence Awareness month. Each year the National Coalition Against Domestic Violence offers a slogan for DV awareness month and during one of those observances, the slogan of the year was *PEACE ON EARTH BEGINS AT HOME*. The pioneers in that movement always knew they were doing something prophetic, but the author of this writing never had a real appreciation of such until attending a conference at Claremont School of Theology in 2003, *Peace-building in Violent Times*. While DV victim advocates continued to struggle with eliminating interpersonal and intimate violence in the home, it became clearer that this goal of

stopping gender-based violence and oppression in the home would be a giant step towards creating a culture of peace at home and beyond.

People in the temporal space of the twenty-first century seem to be faced with an era of increasing global instability—economically, politically, socially, ecologically and spiritually. This global instability challenges many to enter into a process of critical reflection aimed towards enacting and enlivening a culture of peace. The events of both 911 and the pre-emptive strike against the Iraqi regime during the Bush Administration presented a formidable task for people throughout the planet, wanting and working for peaceful coexistence. More than prayerful reflection is warranted. Especially among people of faith and faith leaders, critical analysis and strategic action are the orders of the day. The researcher's own process in regard to these events has been stimulated by both the work that the researcher has done with domestic violence awareness and intervention in the faith community, as well as a response to the work already initiated by human rights activist in the faith community among several of the United Methodist Bishops, clergy, and laity.

The researcher's process has led to formulating the following theory: A historical exploration of connections between sexual and domestic violence (gender-based and intimate partner violence) and global violence reveals the twin phenomena to be rooted in Judeo-Christian-Islamic patriarchal constructs. As such, these connections should be amenable to creative transformation by a liberative theology and hermeneutic of the Scriptures.

Issues of domination, power and control have been used for centuries to serve the patriarchy in its mission to remain the most powerful force in the planet. With clock-like

persistence, interpersonal relationships at both the basic unit of the family and the all encompassing global unit have been pervaded with issues of violence, domination and control. When the lens through which one looks is informed by participation in the Judeo-Christian tradition, family/gender-based violence is seen manifesting itself unchecked in *salvation history* beginning as early as events in the Book of Genesis and continuing through the present-day silence about domestic violence in the faith communities of Christians, Jews and Muslims. The one exception in ancient times may have been the era of the radical teaching and ministry of Jesus Christ and perhaps some of his followers.

In Genesis 34 is the story of the rape of Dinah, daughter of Jacob around 1700 BC. Not only is the young woman raped and forced to bear the stigma of that act in that era when virginity was a matter of unspoiled property rather than virtue. Her brothers' revenge for the rape was so violent that Jacob had to move his family and herds. The brothers slaughtered all of the Canaanite men in that region and took their wives, slaves and herds. The revenge was not really about Dinah's honor, but men's property. In Miriam Therese Winter's *Woman Witness*, Dinah is described as being central to the story, but Dinah never speaks, nor is she consulted. Dinah becomes the object of men's so-called love; sexual love and familial love that begins and ends in violence and bodily violation.¹ In the book of Judges 11, Jephthah vows that if God allows him to be successful in battle he would sacrifice the first person to come out of his door when he returned home—he would make a burnt offering to the Lord. His only child, his daughter, was the first to meet him and she was subsequently sacrificed. In 2 Samuel 13 is recorded

¹Miriam Therese Winter, *Woman Witness: A feminist Lectionary and Psalter, Women of the Hebrew Scriptures, Part Two* (New York, NY: Crossroad1992), 222.

the story of the rape of King David's daughter Tamar by her half-brother Amnon, a son of David. Absalom, David's son by another woman and the whole brother of Tamar, vowed vengeance for his sister's rape and dishonor. It took two years, but Absalom killed Amnon and was exiled by King David for killing a brother. With Amnon dead, Absalom was next in line to be king. Did he kill for honor or for gain? These are only three stories about the visitation of gender violence upon women and the motivating or subsequent bloodshed over issues of honor, immature faith and property.

The New Testament Epistles were written when the Roman Empire and Roman customs dominated the world. The status of women and children had not improved much over the two thousand years since the events referred to in the previous paragraph. The so-called *household codes* or *haustafeln* have been used over the centuries to justify and perpetuate the subservient status of women, children and slaves. The codes were also used to elevate and maintain the dominance of males. These were cultural customs indigenous to the Greco-Roman world during ancient times. The socio-cultural and political structures of the day were decidedly patriarchal and authoritarian. The *household codes* were structured around the dominant male head of the family, and a family was comprised of women, children, slaves—all of whom belonged to the male head of the household. The husband/father/master was entitled to service, privilege, obedience and loyalty from women/wife, children and slaves.

The Roman tradition of *patria potestas* gave virtual power of life and death into the hand of the dominating male over other members of the household. Marriageable ages differed dramatically from modern American custom. The female was 'ready' for marriage shortly after reaching puberty in her beginning teen years, while Jewish society did not consider the male an adult (that is, marriageable) until his thirtieth birthday. Although Roman society had somewhat different views about the male, most males

were married off in both Roman and Jewish societies in their early thirties. Thus, typically a 15 to 20 year age difference existed between husband and wife. Under normal circumstances a newly married couple would be a wife about 13 yrs old and her husband in his early 30s.²

Of course today in American society, such a practice of an arranged marriage of a young female would be considered child sexual abuse and/or statutory rape. However in the ancient Roman Empire, that was not the case. Additionally, the Jews and Christians were subject to and influenced by such laws and customs during the era in which the New Testament was written.

Marriage, in the Jewish tradition, was a contractual agreement between two families more so than a commitment between two individuals. Normally, a written marriage contract was agreed upon and signed by the fathers of the couple sometimes while the couple was only small children or infants. Thus, *dissolving a marriage* was viewed as a serious breach of faith between the two families, and most marriage contracts contained provisions outlining the legal obligations to each family in the event of divorce.

Roman society was an extremely violent culture and viewed the use of violence by the dominating male to other family members as entirely normal and legitimate. The modern concepts of 'child abuse' and 'spousal abuse' were unknown in this ancient society. In the Roman cultural tradition the principle of *patria potestas* (=power of the father) controlled the children's relationship to their father. This power of the father over the entire household was absolute and gave the dominating male the legal right to punish by any means for any reason a disobedient wife, child or slave—to the point of executing them!³

These patriarchal and authoritarian customs and practices were not exclusive to Judeo/Christian/Islamic cultural and religious tradition. Major vestiges of these

²Lorin L. Cranford, "Exegeting the New Testament: A Seminar Working Model with Research Bibliography", 2 vols. *Greek 101, Haustafeln*. <http://www.cranfordville.com/G101frame.htm> (accessed 10/21/08).

³Ibid.

patriarchal practices remain in most of the cultures of the world—to greater or lesser degrees today—including our own culture in the United States.

The history of humankind is filled with events of one group or another being conquered, dominated and or controlled by another through military force, economic and cultural violence and oppression up to the present time. There are myriad theories regarding the origins of violence, all of which depend on many factors. This is not an attempt at an exhaustive discussion of them. The focus of this chapter is on how the work being done to ameliorate domestic violence is related to the work being done to create a just peace on earth and a culture of peace in communities through religious faith.

However, it would be helpful to this discussion to offer working definitions of domestic violence and aspects of global violence and to identify some of the connections alluded to in the thesis. One of the better working definitions of domestic violence/family violence/intimate partner violence⁴ is one that has been distributed by the Colorado Attorney General's Office.

Definitions Of Family Violence⁵

Family violence is an attempt to gain and maintain power and control over one's intimate adult partner. Family violence occurs in all ethnic groups, in all socio-economic levels, in straight, gay, lesbian, and bisexual relationships, and in all religious denominations. Family violence has many forms, as follows:

⁴I will use these several terms interchangeably throughout this paper.

⁵This definition was distributed at the Colorado Attorney General's 2nd Annual Conference on Violence and the Workplace, February 15, 2001, during the workshop on "Relationship Violence Comes to Work – Practical Advice" presented by representatives of AMEND and Family Tree.

- Physical Abuse
- Sexual Abuse
- Verbal Abuse
- Emotional Abuse
- Financial Control
- Isolation
- Gift Giving
- Stalking

Physical abuse includes:

- Pushing, shoving, slapping, biting, kicking, choking, punching
- Throwing objects at the victim
- Threatening the victim with a weapon
- Forcing the victim off the road while driving
- Subjecting the victim to reckless driving
- Abandoning the victim in dangerous places
- Purposely locking the victim out of the house

Sexual abuse includes:

- Treating the victim as a sex object
- Repeatedly subjecting the victim to anti-woman/anti-man jokes and sexual insults
- Withholding affection
- Calling the victim derogatory sexual names (i.e., "whore")

- Extreme jealousy, leading to continual accusations of promiscuity
- Making the victim dress in a sexually provocative manner which makes her/him feel uncomfortable
- Forcing the victim to strip
- Forcing sex while others watch; forcing sex with objects; forcing sex after a beating
- rape

Verbal abuse includes:

- Name-calling
- Yelling the screaming
- Cursing the victim
- Insulting and repeatedly, sometimes subtly, putting the victim down

Emotional abuse includes:

- Ignoring the victim
- Ridiculing the victim's beliefs, race, class, education
- Withhold approval, appreciation
- Blaming the victim for everything that goes wrong
- Humiliating the victim in front of others
- Forbidding the victim to contribute to the decision-making process
- Threatening the victim with abandonment, kidnapping the children, hurting pets or family
- Threatening suicide if the victim does not submit/comply
- Threatening to "out" a same-sex partner

- Telling the victim the abuse is her/his fault; accusing victim of provoking or deserving the "punishment"
- Using "crazy-making" behavior; manipulating with lies and contradictions

Financial control includes:

- Forbidding the victim to work
- Sabotaging the victim's efforts to obtain or hold a job
- Denying the victim access to bank accounts
- Forcing the victim to ask or beg for money
- Taking the victim's money or assets
- Demanding the victim account for every cent she/he is given; requiring receipts for everything purchased/paid for

Isolation includes:

- Denying the victim access to a telephone
- Forbidding the victim to drive
- Forbidding the victim to socialize or have any contact with friends or family members
- Moving away from a home community, family and/or friends

Gift Giving (also known as the Hearts and Flowers Stage) includes:

- Romancing the victim with gifts
- Seducing the victim
- Making promises to change
- Assuring the victim the abuse will never happen again

Stalking includes:

- Gathering information on the victim from friends, family, the Department of Motor Vehicles, others
- Covertly surveying the victim, driving past her/his home and work, calling and hanging up
- Overtly following and surveying the victim; calling multiple times a day
- Enlisting the help of friends to gather information on or follow the victim
- Invading the victim's home, car, workplace
- Leaving "gifts" for the victim to find in personal/intimate places
- Making threats

This rather lengthy listing is to emphasize the pervasiveness of the abusive behaviors which occur in the home among kin and intimates across cultures, age range, faith tradition and social class. The victims of such violence are most often women, children, and other less powerful ones. The youthful witnesses and victims often go on to repeat such violence and victim identity in the next generation and in the larger community.

Studies show that child abuse occurs in 30-60% of family violence cases that involve families with children. In 92 percent of all domestic violence incidents, crimes are committed by men against women. Between 1976 and 1996, 31,260 women in the United States were murdered by an intimate. It is estimated that 5.9 million women are

physically abused by their husbands or live-in partners each year, and 503,485 women are stalked by an intimate partner each year in the United States⁶

In other nations and cultures of the world, gender-based violence spawned by patriarchy manifest in equally heinous ways. Just a few examples are as follows:

- Violence against women, including assault, mutilation, murder, infanticide, rape, cruel neglect, is perhaps the most pervasive yet least recognized human rights issue in the world. Source: *World Watch Institute*
- More than 90 million African women and girls are victims of female circumcision or other forms of genital mutilation. Source: *World Health Organization Report*
- 50 percent of married women are regularly battered by their partners in Bangkok, Thailand. Source: *World Watch Institute*
- An estimated 1000 women are burned alive each year in dowry-related incidents in the state of Gujarat, India alone. Source. *Ahmadabad Women's Action Group Report*
- 78,000 female fetuses were aborted after sex determination test between 1978-1982. Source: *A Study at a Bombay Clinic*.
- In Mexico, a woman is raped every nine minutes. Source: *Doble Jomada*
- More than half of the Nicaraguan women beaten by their partners had been beaten for more than a year before laying charges. One woman had been beaten systematically for 32 years. Source *Clinica Legal pana la Mujer Nicaragua*.
- One in 10 Canadian women will be abused or battered by her husband or partner. Source: *Wife Battering in Canada, Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women*.⁷

At various times in history people have thought of the violence against women as something that went on behind closed doors and were nobody's business. According to an United Nations report from UNIFEM, violence against women and children and

⁶Domestic Violence Information for Students and General Public, "What is Domestic Violence?" <http://www.ndhv.org/dvInfo.htm1#stats> (accessed 4/21/03).

⁷"Facts On Global Violence: Empowered Women: Challenging Violence And HIV/AIDS Globally," *Vital Signs*, Vol. XI , Issue III, (July – August 1995), 29.

global violence have a renewed connection. In the forward to a United Nations publication, *Women, War and Peace*, the executive director of UNIFEM writes:

I have witnessed the impact of conflict on women in many countries. In the “Valley of Widows” in Columbia, I met women who had lost their husbands and their land—everyone and everything important to them had been destroyed by civil war and drug lords. I have been to Bosnia where women described abduction, rape camps and forced impregnation, and to Rwanda where women had been gang raped and purposely infected with HIV. Stories like these were repeated again and again in different languages, in different surroundings...only the horror and the pain were the same. Clearly the nature of war has changed. It is being fought in homes and communities—and on women’s bodies in a battle for resources and in the name of religion and ethnicity. Violence against women is used to break and humiliate women, men, families, communities, no matter which side they are on. Women have become the worst victims of war—and the biggest stakeholders of peace.⁸

The terms of a working definition for global violence, are of such magnitude that the use of the graphic, *The Violence Iceberg* helps one perceive the historical insidiousness as well as the dynamic interaction of violence in our lives. One can reflect on just some of the violence which emanates from the roots of institutional and cultural violence—conflict and violence (including terrorism) among and between nations and cultures towards the goal of being in control for purposes of power and domination of the world’s people and resources. In the course of such violence, any number of human rights are violated and compromised, as noted in the UNIFEM report.

The tip of the iceberg is the obvious and criminal violence that all can see and may be subject to. When looking beneath the surface, what is revealed is a real sense of the danger, power and risk of the unseen levels of institutional and cultural violence which gives rise to the obvious destructive behaviors at the top. The stealth-like nature of institutional and cultural violence makes it difficult to nearly impossible to directly

⁸Elisabeth Rehn & Ellen Johnson, “Women, War and Peace: The Independent Experts’ Assessment on the Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and Women’s Role in Peacebuilding <http://www.unifem.undp.org/resources/assessment/foreword.pdf> (accessed 5/03/03).

confront the persistent manifestations of the imbedded nature of this violence. If people cannot clearly see *it* and concretize *it*, *it* is not real too many. Yet few of the violent crimes which are apparent on the top of the iceberg would occur as often if the underlying *isms* were being confronted and dealt with effectively on an on-going basis.

THE VIOLENCE ICEBERG

CRIMINAL VIOLENCE-highly visible, object of most reaction

- Murder, rape, assault, domestic violence
- Destruction of property, white collar crime

INSTITUTIONAL VIOLENCE-less visible, more powerful

- Inequality in education & business opportunities
- Lack of employment opportunities based on race & gender
- Lack of opportunities based on differently-abled

CULTURAL VIOLENCE-invisible, most powerful

- Cultural attitudes of racism, sexism, classism, homophobia
- Economic oppression, poverty, eco-destruction
- Easy acceptance of violence as normal and acceptable⁹

The great irony of exploring these issues of domestic violence and community/global violence at a time when the United States of America is still peripherally involved in an unjust war over *weapons of mass destruction* is the following: The real weapons of mass

⁹Vera K. White, *A Call to Hope: Living as Christians in a Violent Society* (New York, NY: Friendship Press, 1997) 22.

destruction are not biological, chemical or nuclear. The real weapons of mass destruction are cultural and for purposes of this study manifest as sexism, racism and classism.

Almost every nation and community in the world has an ample supply of these weapons. From the heads of state down to the basic family unit, people are armed with these highly destructive weapons. Sexism, racism and classism are three of the strong connections between domestic violence and community and global violence.

There is a related school of thought regarding gender and sexual violence put forth by Dr. Frank Yamada in his seminal work, *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible: A Literary analysis of Three Rape Narratives*.¹⁰ Yamada's work in the aforementioned volume is based on the rape narratives in the Hebrew Scriptures referenced earlier in this chapter. In a Sabbatical Lecture presented at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary on April 23, 2008, Yamada discusses *Rape Narratives as Cultural Critique: A Literary-Cultural Interpretation of Rape Texts in the Hebrew Bible*. What is most salient for the researcher's purposes for her study is Yamada' understanding of feminist scholarship regarding gender sexual violence as cultural phenomena. Yamada writes, "they [feminist scholars] have emphasized an analysis which understands rape as a culturally systemic problem. Hence, the questions shift from definitions of rape or the anatomy of a crime to ways of understanding the kinds of cultural systems that support, reinforce, and script sexual violence against women—in other words, a rape culture."¹¹

¹⁰Frank M. Yamada, *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible: A Literary analysis of Three Rape Narratives* (New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2006).

¹¹Frank M. Yamada, Seabury-Western Theological Seminary "Rape Narratives as Cultural Critique: A Literary-Cultural Interpretation of Rape Texts in the Hebrew Bible," Sabbatical Lecture Presented at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary on April 23, 2008.

The researcher understanding of rape narratives and Yamada's analysis of them in Hebrew scripture would indicate that Judeo-Christian tradition has included and support a rape culture. It would be reasonable to assume that the isms-sexism, racism and classism are cultural systems which underpin the historical gender-based violence. This type of violence is being experienced by women and girls in the United States of America and in other parts of the world—more specifically, intimate partner violence/domestic violence and spousal rape.

Beyond this assumption about and analysis of gender-based violence is a ripple effect which can be described as a culture of violence, especially in the African American urban community ravaged by other types of violence emanating from intimate partner violence. This culture of violence does manifest as child abuse, youth gang violence, random street violence, and economic, environmental and social violence to name a few. Some of this thinking on the part of the researcher has been informed by Yamada's analysis of what was happening in the ancient Near East at the time of the rape narratives included in the Hebrew Scriptures. Yamada sees the action in the biblical rape narratives progressing from the rapes → to excessive male violence → to social fragmentation which destroyed extended families, caused tribal wars and destroyed nations.¹² The researcher sees a parallel to this historical pattern of behavior in contemporary African American communities dating back to black slavery in the United States. Sexism, racism, classicism underpinning intimate partner violence, propels the instability in that relationship to dysfunctional families to under-resourced neighborhoods to fragmented and neglected communities that manifest the range of institutional violence described

¹²Ibid.

above. Transformation cannot take place by merely obtaining a restraining order. The isms and other cultural paradigms have to change.

These three *isms* have been widely defined, described, analyzed, and more by just about every professional and academic discipline, by advocates for change, by reactionaries for the status quo, by victims and perpetrators. When all is said and done, the *isms* are manifestations of a global system of domination and control by any means necessary. In Walter Wink's *The Powers That Be*, he describes this network of isms and all they manifest as an overarching network of evil spiritual powers called the Domination System that has been in place for about 5000 years. It is characterized by unjust economic relations, oppressive political relations, biased race relations, patriarchal gender relations, hierarchical power relations and the use of violence to maintain them all.¹³

United Methodist Bishop, C. Dale White's seminal work, *Making a Just Peace: Human Rights & Domination Systems*, brings a ray of hope to the researcher's reflection as White looks at the *isms* from a human rights perspective and most importantly *in defense of God's creation*. As Bishop White identifies Wink's Powers as hunger-making, war-making and desert-making systems, impinging on human rights; his final chapter critically confronts the *domination system* which he identifies as *patriarchy*. Bishop White told this researcher in a face to face conversation in January 2003 that the UMC Bishops' document—*In Defense of Creation*—had been thoroughly criticized by a Dr. Janice Love, professor of political science at the University of South Carolina. Her critique was that it was a sexist document. To compensate for that defect, Bishop White

¹³Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium*, (New York, NY: Galilee Doubleday, 1999), 39-40.

wrote this chapter on *Confronting...Patriarchy*. Some of Dr. Love's remarks are part of Bishop White's essay on patriarchy and include her thinking that:

One of the most pervasive forces feeding violence and militarism in Western cultures is “the fundamental symbioses between sexism and the war system.” Patriarchy is the socio-sexual foundation of war-making systems, not only in the United States, but also in all of the militarized nation states...violence prone men are nurtured in patriarchal institutions that systematically train young people in sharply defined roles...men’s work, women’s work.¹⁴ Bishop White also contends that the psychological seeds of violence are sown in families for whom abusive behavior is the accepted way of life. Violence must be challenged at every level—families, schools, communities, and governments.¹⁵ Domestic violence advocates around the world have been working for the elimination of gender violence and the empowerment of women globally. Family violence must be addressed by the world community. It is not a private matter, but has become a global pandemic that the international community can neither ignore nor allow to be protected within the privacy of the family. It is an affliction that ravages all regions of the world, all economic and educational strata and all types of families. The family is the primary locus of human socialization and development. If that development process is denied or distorted, the adverse consequences can be irreversible. Behaviors learned in the home are replicated in the wider society. “We in the United Nations system,” said Karin Sham Poo, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director for Operations, in her opening statement, “have at last recognized violence in the family as a formidable obstacle to socioeconomic development, to say nothing of universal peace and justice.”¹⁶

In every nation, where these advocates are at work, domestic violence is considered as human rights abuse, worthy of the attention of the United Nations and

¹⁴C. Dale White, *Making a Just Peace: Human Rights & Domination Systems* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1998), 130-31.

¹⁵*Ibid.*, 130.

¹⁶United Nations Development Fund for Women [UNIFEM], United Nations Children's Fund [UNICEF], *Creating Violence-Free Families, A Symposium Summary Report*, New York, 23-25 May, 1994, <http://www.fragrant.demon.co.uk/violence.html> (accessed March 3, 2010).

similar organizations upholding basic human rights. It is troubling however, that one of the major UN conventions—The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)—has been stuck in the US Senate since 1980, while most of the world's countries have ratified it. Ironically, at this writing, the United States is now one of only eight countries that have yet to ratify CEDAW—alongside Sudan, Somalia, Qatar, Iran, Nauru, Palau and Tonga. This type of power play in our own nation, leads to a belief that forming solidarity among the people of God to make peace at home and in the world is our greatest call and our greatest hope.

The church's call to peacemaking is to deconstruct the constructs of sexism, racism and classism and thereby disarm these three weapons of mass destruction. Our vocation is the reconstruction of the Judeo-Christian history of salvation. We are to use her-story to feature and always keep before us the liberating message of the Gospel—to love God, love ourselves as God's creation and to love our neighbors and all of creation as we love ourselves, and not to resist those who do evil. In spite of the Domination System's specter shadowing Christian salvation history, the clear choice confronting the institutional church is to participate intentionally in annihilation or transformation.

It would seem that a strategic approach to peacemaking for abusive families would be to collaborate with the faith community. There has been much more resistance to that approach than advocates anticipated. Churches and their leaders are as much a part of the Domination System as any other institution. In spite of that statement, many believe the universal church has the authentic call to peacemaking at all levels and a mandate to deconstruct the constructs of sexism, racism and classism; thereby constructing a culture of peace. Christian vocation is transformation of our salvation story

to feature and always keep before the world the liberating message of the Gospel and the primary commandments: to love God, ourselves, our neighbors, all of creation and not to resist those who do evil. In the shadow of the Domination System's carnage, there is redemption.

"Jesus' Answer to Domination" is a chapter in *The Powers That Be*¹⁷ (PTB) which summarizes Wink's works from his "*Powers Trilogy*"¹⁸ on some of Jesus' teachings. Wink writes, "Almost every sentence Jesus uttered was an indictment of the Domination System or the disclosure of an alternative to it."¹⁹ To a greater degree than other scholars, Wink's research and analysis informs the researcher's reflections and attempts to strategize how the Church can deconstruct, disarm and reconstruct for shalom.

More than one critic has observed that the social change movements, other than the Martin Luther King lead civil rights movement of the 1960s have not been able to capture the passion of the nation the way that *patriotism* does. The critics answer is that social movements do not claim the moral and ethical high ground steeped in scripture that the civil rights movement was able to claim. Wink helps one envision a way in which the scripture can be used to undergird peacemaking activity that claims the moral high ground with scripture as a source and disarms the *isms* as a resulting action.

In terms of domestic violence/family violence/gender violence and the connection to global violence/domination system, Wink has some thoughtful interpretations of what Jesus said regarding just economics, nonviolence, women, and family. Jesus' behavior

¹⁷Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (New York, NY: Galilee Doubleday, 1998).

¹⁸Euphemism for three books written by Walter Wink with the word "Powers" in the titles.

¹⁹Wink, *The Powers That Be*, 64.

and ministry crushed the concept of social and economic class privilege and helps current thinkers and activists to conceptualize corporate sin within all our societal institutions and the need to transform those structures—secular and religious. Wink observes that a society with an unfair distribution of goods requires violence. Violence is the only way some are able to deprive others of what is justly theirs. Inequality between the rich and the poor can only be maintained by violence.²⁰

Similarly, Jesus was neither a sexist nor misogynist and had some radical things to say about family that had little to do with hierarchical structures. Wink points out that in every encounter with women in the four gospels, Jesus violated the customs of his time. Indeed, his approach to women had no parallel in *civilized* societies since the rise of patriarchy over three thousand years before Jesus' birth.²¹ He goes on to assert his belief that Jesus was so consistently disparaging because the family in dominator societies is so deeply embedded in patriarchy and serves as the citadel of male supremacy—the chief inculcator of gender roles, and a major inhibitor of change. It is in families where most women and children are battered and abused and where the majority of women are murdered.²²

Ultimately Wink uses his interpretation of scripture to testify to the transforming power of love. Wink writes, “The powers had used their final sanction against Jesus and had failed to silence him. Not even death could hold him. But if a mere Galilean artisan has withstood the entire Domination System and has prevailed, then the power of the

²⁰Ibid., 69.

²¹Ibid., 73.

²²Ibid., 76.

Powers is not, after all, ultimate. There is another power at work in the universe that, like water, cuts stone: nonviolent love.²³

The Church and those working in peacemaking solidarity with it have the potential to liberate other scriptural territory which has been used to support domination systems for the lifetime of Christendom—scriptures such as the *household codes of behavior* in the New Testament Epistles. Progressive Christians, feminist, womanist, and liberationist—all counter the misogynistic interpretation of these scriptures with the words of Jesus and they lay claim to Paul's interpretation of the Christian life in scriptures like Galatians 3:26-28;

For in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus.²⁴

This scripture goes a long way towards disarming sexism, racism and classism. The action that results from the removal of the barriers of race, gender and class is the ministry of reconciliation. In 2 Corinthians 5:17-19, Paul writes:

So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see everything has become new! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation; that is, in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself not counting their trespasses against them, and entrusting the message of reconciliation to us.²⁵

Deconstructing the *isms* thereby disarming the weapons of mass destruction which serve the domination system and reconstructing our salvation and redemption story

²³Ibid., 80.

²⁴Gal 3:26-28 (NSRV).

²⁵2 Cor 5:17-19 (NRSV).

begins to break the connections between domestic violence and global violence. Moreover, this process transforms family dynamics from bastions of training for the patriarchy to basic communities of love, nurture, respect, work and play. Individuals who come from this type family enrich and enliven neighborhoods, which interact with families and on behalf of families to create communities of shalom and cultures of peace in which all of God's good creation is honored and maintained—the Kingdom now and to come. This is not utopia; it is God's aim for us and our God-given capacity to be creatively responsive to God's call.

Biblical Foundations

There is an urgent and critical need for the Black church, as the primary institutional presence in the African American community, to begin a transformational engagement with the phenomena of domestic violence or intimate partner abuse as a highly destructive and negative manifestation in the community. As great as the need may be, there are and have been powerful and historical barriers to an ethical and life-sustaining hermeneutical response by the Black/African American institutional church to such need. One might ask, "What does domestic violence and the church have to do with each other?" Then one could answer, "The persistent and intentional marginalization of women in the Black church, in particular, has lead to an intolerable and archaic silence about the disproportionately high levels of intimate partner violence which occur in

African American families and communities—many of whom comprise the membership of the Black Church.²⁶

This writing on Biblical Foundations is to discuss the notion that some of the sources of silence and violence has been and continues to be the sexist, classist and patriarchal interpretations of biblical scripture in general. This historical bent towards rigid, literal interpretation of pertinent scripture has led to questionable ethical leadership from the contemporary Black church, when leaders are faced with domestic violence among members or in the community. Even more troubling is the missed opportunity for the church and its leaders to teach Bible study, preach, worship and model Christian behavior in ways that prevent intimate partner violence and promote healthy Christian lifestyles. The ultimate goal of this study and discussion is to advance a transforming, liberating, and corrective ethos and praxis via the Black church, as one of the primary steps in creating a culture of peace in our families and communities. The scriptural focus of this reflection on Biblical Foundations is Paul's Epistle to the Romans, chapter 12:1-2:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God; what is good and acceptable and perfect.

Many contemporary Bible scholars and commentators have written on all aspects of the book of Romans. Fewer have focused on Romans 12:1 and 2 extensively. There seems to be consensus that Romans 12:1 has to do with the ethical response to the grace of God in all its manifestations and 12: 2 has more to do with life in the new community

²⁶This is the writer's opinion from more than 50 years of observation and experience in and with the Black church and 30 years of professional work in the prevention of and intervention in sexual and domestic violence.

of Jewish and Gentile Christians—both verses paraenetic nature. In C.K. Barrett's *Paul: An Introduction to His Thought*, there is no reference to 12:1 or 2.²⁷ Christiaan Beker's *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul's Thought*, these verses are not referred to separately, but part of a reference to Romans 12:1-15:13, but to signify Paul's ethical exhortations in Romans. Beker also refers to Romans 12:1 in his discussion of the Spirit's activity in our bodies as precursor to praise and honoring God in our bodies.²⁸ Calvin Roetzel uses levity to have the reader envision Paul speaking Romans 12:1 to Jewish Christians regarding the ethical implications of law-free gospel.²⁹

It is in Robert Banks' revised edition of *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Cultural Setting* that the researcher begins to sense some affirmation of the use of Romans 12:1-2 as a biblical directive and foundation for the kind of ministry that will address the experience of intimate partner violence in the African American faith traditions and community. *Paul's Idea of Community* contains a chapter—"Intellectual Elements in Growth."—which describes some elements of a maturing or growing Christian community. One section of that chapter refers to, *The Centrality of Knowledge* and begins with: "Paul says that growth takes place within the community only insofar as its members are *increased with, enriched by, renewed through, and fitted with* knowledge. Elsewhere he speaks of growth occurring via *the*

²⁷C. K. Barrett, *Paul: An Introduction to His Thought* (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1994), 179.

²⁸Christiaan Beker, *The Triumph of God: The Essence of Paul's Thought* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1990), 97.

²⁹Calvin Roetzel, *Paul: The Man and the Myth* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 29.

renewal of their minds.³⁰ Among other aspects of Christian community explored in this book include a chapter on *The Contribution of Women in Church*.

In *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*, Thomas Hoyts commentary on Romans includes an article about Martin Luther King's sermon, *The Transformed Non-conformist*, based on Romans 12:2. This article provided more clarity around this scripture for the researcher than the half dozen books and articles consulted written by Eurocentric theologians and scholars. Literally this researcher was able to discern that the status of being African American, battered woman, former perpetrator, victim of sexual assault, carry a non-conforming identity when placed within the context of mainstream society, the secular world and some churches. Receiving the gift of a renewed mind through Christ gives the transformed non-conformist dual citizenship in the worlds of both time and eternity, but owing ultimate loyalty to eternity alone.³¹ Jesus was the world's most dedicated non-conformist. Renewed minds call his followers—then and now—to be like him. A transformed non-conformist is able to discern the will of God. This scripture becomes a major informant for the process and direction of the ministry central to this study. To liberate the African American community from the scourge of domestic and sexual violence will require a major paradigm shift for the community and its traditional institutions.

There is irony in this reflection on the Romans 12:2 mandate for transformation and the discussion of household codes as laid out in Ephesians 5:22-6:9 in the Historical

³⁰ Robert Banks, *Paul's Idea of Community: The Early House Churches in their Cultural Setting* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1998), 70.

³¹ Thomas L. Hoyt Jr., "Romans," *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary*, Edited by Brian K. Blount, Cain Hope Felder, Clarice J. Martin, and Emerson B. Powery (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2007), 269.

Foundations portion of this study. The so-called *household codes* or *haustafeln* have been used over the centuries to subjugate women. This is another example of how scripture can hurt or heal, based on ones knowledge and capacity to interpret and analyze.

Much of the behavior related to marriage and family life in biblical times was about the acquisition and maintenance of wealth, protection of honor and avoidance of shame. The Gospel overturns all of these traditions with Jesus' emphasis on the poor, the least, the little ones', the peacemakers, the diseased, the outcast, etc. Therefore the influence of the Gospel and its egalitarianism presented challenges for the Roman emperors, the Synagogue leaders and the new Christians.

Probably Paul was considered as much a non-conformist as Jesus, and was willing to die for the Gospel. However, inconsistencies in Paul's written views on the status of women could be attributed to his desire not to sacrifice others' lives. Therefore, we find *the household codes* creeping into theological treatises possibly as a way to protect the early Christians rather than to subjugate women, children and slaves. However, once power and authority are obtained, it is difficult to give them up.

As the early church became more institutionalized, the codes began to be used to maintain power and authority over congregations and those who challenged the evolving institutional power structure. Any freedom that women may have tasted during the Post-Resurrection and Pauline eras was quickly withdrawn as the church struggled with competing doctrines and heresies. The patriarchy prevailed, as did slavery and the reality of privileged males owning their wives and children.

In order for the Christian Bible to be a book for all people and for all times, there must be a way of engaging scripture that is both faithful to God's plan of salvation for

humankind as well as the reality of the socio-cultural context of each reader. The way we live and relate to one another today often has little resemblance to the life and relationships of first century Christians or pagans. As was previously mentioned, today's society has different cultural, social and legal standards for marriage, the protection of children, the nuclear and extended family, the civil rights of women, ethnic minorities, disabled persons, etc. Today it is a capital crime to murder your wife or child and illegal to even own slaves. At some levels Christians have evolved into a non-conforming Kin-dom³² people, transforming the world by living into a Gospel that is revealing itself to be for all times and all people. Therefore, people today are able to discern God's wisdom for life situations that first century people could not even imagine.

The scripture does not enslave, but liberates. One need look no further than the issue of literal slavery in the Americas to experience the fulfillment of the promise of liberative theology. The horror and the evil of an economy being built on the labor of enslaved Africans brought to the new world forcibly, became the primary challenge to an institutional church that had used the household codes to salve the consciences of those who benefited most from slavery. Yet, those who had a higher understanding and interpretation of the Gospel (transformed by renewing their minds) began to fight that ethical, spiritual and legal battle, side by side with free and enslaved Blacks in America, for the freedom promised by the Gospel.

What is interesting, remarkable and ironic about the haustefeln phenomena, is that Western theologians, ethicists, politicians, historians, jurists and many others successfully argued for the cessation of black human slavery in the Americas—once grounded in

³²Kin-dom is being used by the writer as a gender neutral variation of Kingdom as well as emphasizing the kin-ship inherent in the Body of Christ—the Church.

these very codes—but not for the liberation of women or Black women in particular. Clarice Martin in her essay "The Haustefeln (Household Codes)" writes, "If African Americans have persistently interpreted and reinterpreted any regulation in the New Testament in light of American social and religious history, it has been the slave regulation in the Haustefeln: "Slaves be submissive to your master: Col. 3:22-25; Eph. 6:5-8; 1 Peter 2:18-25."³³

Herein resides the ethical and hermeneutical dilemma for the Black church. It has been able to liberate and redeem the household codes apropos³⁴ slavery but not the status and condition of African American women in the eyes and space of the church, home and community. Historically and culturally, biblical scripture has been used by the Black church to develop a liberative theology for the freedom of the so called Black man, but the same scripture is used by the Black church to continue to subjugate and marginalize its women and girls. This tradition spawned by a patriarchal, sexist and misogynistic conforming hermeneutic has served to keep Black women submissive and disempowered as wives, intimate partners and members of the community. The seductiveness of male privilege and power has undermined and corrupted the moral and prophetic agency of the Black church, allowing an exclusivity to male leadership and authority which has given subtle permission to a reign of gender-based terror called violence against women.

Such terror is not new; the Hebrew Scriptures abound with it. Metaphors for God's plan for salvation are often some of the most vivid descriptions of violence against women in written history and literature. Renita Weems' *Battered Love: Marriage, Sex,*

³³Clarice Martin, "The Haustefeln (Household Codes) in African American Biblical Interpretation": "Free Slaves" and "Subordinate Women" in Cain Hope Felder, ed.; *Stony The Road We Trod* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 213.

³⁴Apropos, definition: preposition meaning regarding or on the subject of.

and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets is just such a critical study of images of malevolence (male violence [writer's play on words]) against women and girls in the Hebrew scriptures. Weems conjectures that the proliferation of such images and metaphors in the written text of scripture has captured the base imaginations of men and have informed and served the abuse and maltreatment of women for centuries.³⁵

Ironically it is because of the androcentric writing of salvation history that is our Christian Bible that we witness the movement and the awesome power of the Holy Spirit—enabling females and other oppressed to discern the revelation of the truly radical loving nature of God in Christ and the radical liberating nature of the Gospel. The struggle to hold on to the Gospel—the good news—is the hermeneutical and ethical challenge facing the Black church and its dilemma over the status, place and role of women. The phenomena of domestic violence are an aberration of human intimacy, fueled by concepts such as a literal interpretation of the household codes for the power differential in the Christian marital relationship.

It is both troubling and puzzling that African Americans would accept without question the orthodox, patriarchal and sexist interpretation and practices of a Eurocentric hermeneutic surrounding the status and roles of women in the church, the home and the public life of the community. There has been whole-hearted acceptance of dogma and doctrine based on the hermeneutical works of privileged men of European descent. The interpretations of such scholars and theologians serve the hierarchical power positions of white supremacy, male supremacy, compulsive heterosexism, racism and religious bigotry.

³⁵Renita J. Weems, *Battered Love: Marriage, Sex, and Violence in the Hebrew Prophets* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1995), 90-98.

Counter efforts are underway on many fronts—the Holy Spirit, feminist, womanist, progressive Christians and evangelical Christians who believe in biblical equality of men and women. Some of the hermeneutical process underpinning a more responsive interpretation and empowering biblical ethic has been given to us by the prophetic womanist theologians, scholars, pastors and laypersons. Clarice Martin's very cogent analysis and strategic vision for *how we will live*, i.e., how we will counter the literal interpretation of the haustafeln is an example of the richness that awaits the Black church's need for inspired and prophetic leadership. Martin recounts for us some of the liberative hermeneutical work done by African American women over the past 150 years, demonstrating leadership in the church, in the community and in the academy. She suggest a womanist perspective as an alternative to Black liberation theology because the liberationists have been blinded by the explicit biblical texts' narratives of freedom and have failed to see the more obscured hermeneutical opportunities extending a liberating grace to African American women from the bonds of gender and interpretive slavery.³⁶ The phenomena are reminiscent of the dynamic of patriarchal and sexist redactors at work in the process of creating biblical canon. The redactors and translators have been brutal in their choice of story, metaphor and situation committed to writing and version of God's inspired word.

The good news is that the leadership of the Black church—because as a people African Americans have already won a hermeneutical and ethical war with slavery—has unique opportunities and resources to directly impact knowledge, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors which often lead to deadly violence within the family and other interpersonal relationships. As a community and a people at high risk for both external and self-

³⁶Clarice Martin, The Haustafeln (Household Code) 226-231.

destruction, metaphorically and literally, African American people of faith cannot live into the promise of shalom if behavior is predicated upon first century patriarchal constructs of family, gender and social location. To continue to model African American intimate and familial relationships on so-called spiritual teachings which marginalize women and girls and sanction male privilege in the church and in the home, is to reject wholeness and the beloved community as possibilities for African American men, women and children.

Violence begets violence unless the spiral is reversed. It is ironic and troubling that the booming economy of a growing penal system is too often driven by the drama that precedes from Black people's traumas. Not only are intolerable numbers of African American men incarcerated or on probation/parole, but increasing numbers of African American girls and women are also. Much of this criminalized behavior is directly related to the abuses of sexual assault, domestic violence, child abuse and the self-medicating of substance abuse. These are preventable and changeable behaviors—transformation.

Domestic and sexual violence crosses the proverbial lines of class, socio-economics, age, faith tradition, etc. Therefore, every Sunday in the pews of our churches sit both victims and perpetrators of domestic violence. Essentially then, domestic violence becomes everybody's business. The Black church cannot maintain silence and inaction regarding these phenomena and call themselves followers of Christ, Prince of Peace.

The historical and generally accepted usage of the biblical scriptures to extend the life of this destructive behavior is also the first and last defense. Scripture can be used to

hurt, but also to heal.³⁷ In the Hebrew Scriptures, there are many alternatives to the *texts of Terror*" written of by Phyllis Trible.³⁸ There are texts of hope.³⁹ There are texts that give opportunity to church, community and individuals to be prophetic, transformative, and reconciling—bringing hope and healing to those who suffer the literal gender-based violence against body, mind and spirit. One such text is found in Isaiah 58:6-12.⁴⁰

One of the messages inherent in this passage is God's disdain for empty worship—worship which excites people on Sunday perhaps through great gospel music and emotional preaching. Long and eloquent prayers are focused on the performers, not on God. Subsequently people do not know how to live the rest of the week and the kin-dom is not being prepared. Another message is one of getting outside the church building and doing works of justice and compassion for the oppressed, the poor and hungry, the homeless and those in need. Our religious leaders and their followers are

³⁷Portion of a book title: *Women, Abuse and the Bible, How Scripture Can Be Used to Hurt or Heal*, edited by Catherine Clark Kroeger and James R. Beck.

³⁸Phyllis Trible, *Texts of Terror: Literary-Feminist Readings of Biblical Narratives* (St Paul MN: Augsburg Fortress Publishers), 1984.

³⁹Michael J. Mazza, "Texts of Terror, Texts of Hope: Teaching the Bible as Literature in a Gay-Friendly Context," in *Whosoever: An Online Magazine for Gay Lesbian Bisexual Transgendered Christians*, www.whosoever.org, (accessed January 22, 2009).

⁴⁰Isaiah 58: 6-12, New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). Is not this the fast that I choose: to lose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin? Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your healing shall spring up quickly; your vindicator shall go before you, the glory of the Lord shall be your rear guard. Then you shall call, and the Lord will answer; you shall cry for help, and he will say, Here I am. If you remove the yoke from among you, the pointing of the finger, the speaking of evil, if you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday. The Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your needs in parched places, and make your bones strong; and you shall be like a watered garden, like a spring of water, whose waters never fail. Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.

being promised restoration and shalom if authentic worship is characterized by acts of love, mercy, generosity and justice.

Can the religious leaders serving in communities teeming with random street violence, impoverished and dysfunctional families, victims of domestic and sexual violence fulfill their ethical, moral and prophetic agency as the called and chosen people of God? The call to ethical worship in Romans 12:1 appears to be one of those grace-filled bridges from the Hebrew Scriptures to the New Testament. Romans 12:1-2 also addresses worship and preparedness in the context of hope and resources for the Body of Christ:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.⁴¹

It can be affirmed that when the preached and taught Word says, *be transformed*, creative transformation will take place. The ball is in the court of the African American pulpit and faith community. The rules of the game do have to change, and they have to be applied equally among males and females, young and old.

As a people, African Americans have tasted freedom from slavery. To be free to love from the inside out at every level of interpersonal relationship is a promise yet to live in to. Transformation begins by acknowledging as a people of faith our sins of

⁴¹Rom 12:1-2 (NRSV).

arrogance, ignorance, hubris, unearned privilege and the harm they have brought to the people of God in our culture. When one recalls the passion for justice and right relationship with God and one another that fed the struggle for other freedoms—religious, human and civil rights; we move beyond being frustrated lovers and become love in action.

Some of the action to be taken as transformed people of God would include a code of behavior, action and ethics fit for the *household of God*:

- Embracing an ethical and liberative hermeneutical process by African American Biblical scholars, theologians, pastors, Christian educators, and seminarians when preaching, teaching and studying passages such as those found in Ephesians 5:21-6:9, Colossians 3:18-4:1, 1 Peter 2:18-3:7 and other similar scriptures, which can lay the ground work for transforming the errant understanding of such scriptures and subsequently diminish the sexism, classism and racism perpetuated by the church.
- Reclaim the role of moral agency abdicated by faithless leaders and greedy opportunist.
- Accept the gift of a "womanist Christian perspective, ethic and sensibility" as inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit for the good of God's people.
- Breaking the silence surrounding domestic, sexual and male violence towards women and children is a must do if the church is to honor its role as peacemakers and grow healthy whole people to lead us into the future.
- Women must be ordained and given authority to preach and lead, not just adorn the pulpits of churches dominated by males.
- The church must hold its members who are batterers and abusers accountable—especially those in leadership positions—to the body of Christ and the community.
- Come to understand the synergistic power of the various "isms" and the necessary investment in their defeat for the real life experiences of African Americans.

- We must begin to fully understand value, accept and proclaim that there is room at the table for all of God's children.

When the church becomes transformed non-conformists, renewed by the grace of God through Jesus Christ, the paradigm shifts and the Body of Christ responds in love to the challenge to create a culture of peace—beloved community.

Theological Foundations

Such a liberative interpretation of scripture and subsequent action articulated in the Biblical Foundation reflections would need to be grounded in equally liberative, prophetic and practical theological perspectives. The theological lens through which the African American church would need to look to envision a culture of peace in the family and community will emanate from among several liberative theologies and God's continuing revelation of God's self in the world. The work needing to be done in the African American church and community and among scholars and advocates at the very least is as much practical as theoretical. Faith leaders must have the capacity for articulating and enacting their experience of how God is at work in the world and among those impacted by intimate partner/domestic violence. Building such capacity will enable church leaders to break the conspiracy of silence around sexual and domestic violence, to participate in the healing and restoration of victims, to hold accountable those who perpetrate violence within the bonds of intimacy, and to formulate and implement doctrines of faith and denominational policies grounded in the ethic of love and equality.

The spiritual leadership of those whose theology is traditional to conservative is reflected in the historical and hermeneutical issues already discussed as the foundations of these phenomena of sexual and domestic violence have been studied. Traditionally,

God's role in a corrective praxis has been limited by the patriarchal genderization of God as exclusively male, by primarily male religious leaders, scholars and authority figures. Therefore what is within the sacred canopy of male privilege, becomes "thus saith the Lord" and part and parcel of a theology that has allowed male violence towards intimates to exist unchecked for centuries and God's revelations to the world apparently stopped some time during the late first century Common Era (CE).

Fortunately, God's transcendent nature has inspired and facilitated the rise of several theologies which seemingly resonate with the ethics of love, inclusiveness, freedom, shalom, common sense and responsibility. Theologies that liberate body, mind, spirit and community from the weight of oppression, violence and death have emerged under the broad umbrella of liberating and practical theologies such as Liberation Theology, Black Theology, Feminist Theology, Womanist Theology, Process Theology and the Theology of John Wesley to name several. All, however, have not addressed the particularities of sexual and domestic violence, which is why so much more theological reflection remains to be accomplished. In relation to sexual and domestic violence in the African American families, community and faith-based institutions, issues of race, culture and misuse of powers has been and continues to be addressed. However, gender-based violence does not always get the scholarly and theological attention it merits.

"The United Methodist Church holds that scripture, tradition, experience, and reason are sources and norms for belief and practice but that scripture is primary among them."⁴² An understanding of the aforementioned premise by the author of this

⁴²The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church – 2004 (Nashville, TN: United Methodist Publishing House, 2004).

document⁴³ is that Christian faith is built upon the source of our theological reflection and how we are able to test such a process. As Christians, we are focused and centered on our experience of Jesus Christ in whom we find our meaning and purpose in life here and eternally. The authoritative source for such focus and witness is primarily in the Judeo-Christian Holy Scriptures. John Wesley—founder of Methodism—believed that the living core of the Christian faith was (1) revealed in Scripture; (2) illumined by tradition; (3) vivified in personal experience and (4) confirmed in reason.

The Judeo-Christian Scriptures provide the world with the stories of creation, the history of God's relationship with and through the people of ancient Israel, the Incarnate God through Jesus, and the gift of new and eternal life through Jesus' earthly life death and resurrection and the inception of the body of Christ; the Church. The experience of our Christian faith and the reliance on scripture has been tested and critiqued based on traditions of the patriarchs as well as the community of saints throughout the ages. The traditions of one age do not necessarily serve another era well. Our theological task is further tested by our own personal experiences and the experiences of the corporate body of the church as we encounter the world and our reality as Christians. One then measures what has been read in scripture, what has been studied and observed of tradition, what one has personally experienced as witness to and participant in the work of the reign of God and one's journey of faith. The measuring instrument is reason. Does all this make sense? One of the assumptions of this writing is that the Wesleyan theological approach is one that when practiced would bring about moral and ethical changes that would restore the Church's agency—the African American Church in particular—for

⁴³Writer of this document is a member of the United Methodist Church and an adherent of Wesleyan Theology.

individuals and families impacted by sexual and domestic violence consequent to the persistent patriarchal powers dominating the Church.

Womanist and feminist theologies offer perhaps an even greater opportunity for the theological and practical conversation that needs to take place among African American faith leaders and within the greater community. Linda E. Thomas, Ph.D. is Professor of Theology and Anthropology at Lutheran School of Theology Chicago. In her article, *Womanist Theology, Epistemology and a New Anthropological Paradigm*, Dr. Thomas defines Womanist Theology as follows:

Womanist theology is the positive affirmation of the gifts which God has given black women in the U. S. A. It is, within theological discourse, an emergent voice which advocates a holistic God-talk for all the oppressed. Though centered in the African American woman's reality and story, it also embraces and stands in solidarity with all suppressed subjects. In a word, womanist theology is a theory and practice of inclusivity, accenting gender, race, class, sexual orientation, and ecology. Because of its inclusive methodology and conceptual framework, womanist theology exemplifies reconstructed knowledge beyond the monovocal concerns of black (male) and (white) feminist theologies.⁴⁴

The researcher digresses at this point to challenge the characterization by Thomas of the white feminist theological concerns being monovocal. White feminist process during the nineteenth century was greatly influenced by the likes of Sojourner Truth and other African American women who were also women of faith and the earliest womanist theologians. *The Woman's Bible*, a product of white feminist scholarship is a gift to the process of alternative hermeneutics and the proof of polyvocality in Scripture.

Consider the classic nineteenth century text *The Woman's Bible*. Co-written by a collective of women led by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. *The Woman's Bible* was an anthology of biblical passages juxtaposed with biting commentary by these female critics.

⁴⁴Linda E. Thomas, "Womanist Theology, Epistemology and a New Anthropological Paradigm," <http://www.crosscurrents.org/thomas.htm> (accessed January 28, 2009).

Writing in an era during which opponents of women's suffrage turned to the Bible for intellectual ammunition, Stanton's project boldly explored the polyvocality of this text. For example, Stanton herself uses biblical precedent to undercut the Pauline commands regarding wifely submission:

We have some grand types of women presented for our admiration in the Bible. Deborah for her courage and military prowess; Huldah for her learning, prophetic insight and statesmanship, seated in the college in Jerusalem, where Josiah the king sent his cabinet ministers to consult her as to the policy of his government; Esther, who ruled as well as reigned; and Vashti, who scorned the Apostle's command, "Wives, obey your husbands." She refused the king's orders to grace with her presence his revelling court. (2:86, 87) Stanton thus privileges several authorial voices over that of Paul in Ephesians 5:22.⁴⁵

Even though black male and white feminist theologies allow for alternative hermeneutics, it is the writer's belief that womanist theology offers the greater hope and process for the Black Church to regain its moral and ethical agency and praxis vis-à-vis domestic and intimate partner violence. Womanist have taken polyvocality out of the academy and has it as a critical aspect of Womanist theology's generous inclusivity.

Some of the Womanist theologians have been cited in the Chapter Two on State of the Art of this ministry: Renita Weems, Monica Coleman, Traci West and Tonette Eugene; therefore, will not be sited in this reflection on theological foundations. In reality and metaphorically, their numbers are being added to daily, and that forecast tremendous hope and possibility for the future of the Black Church.

The many voices from all sectors of the African American community and enclaves of spirituality, speaking through a variety of media employed by womanist theologians, are demanding a just and prophetic religious experience—one that will break the theological silence around sexual and domestic violence. As religious denominations

⁴⁵ Michael J. Mazza, "Texts of Terror, Texts of Hope: Teaching the Bible as Literature in a Gay-Friendly Context," *Whosoever: An Online Magazine for Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Christians*, <http://www.whosoever.org/v4i3/mazza.html> (accessed January 28, 2009).

of the Black church increasingly ordain female clergy and as black women of faith increasingly seek seminary education; womanist ethics, hermeneutics and theology will begin to permeate the African American religious experience in the Black church and in the community. In 2008 the courageous and innovative example of United Theological Seminary adding Sexual and Domestic Violence: The Role of Religious Institutions to its Doctor of Ministry Focus Groups serves as a role model of what can be.

What can be is an African American Network for Violence Free Families, grounded in faith and sustained by justice and compassion. Such a network would not confine itself to clergy, but would also seek out and educate lay leadership and other faith traditions represented in the African American community. The gospel does not exclude, as is exemplified in John 10:16: “I have other sheep that do not belong to this fold. I must bring them also, and they will listen to my voice. So there will be one flock, one shepherd.”⁴⁶ This scriptural and theological basis for inclusiveness and the expansiveness of God’s grace also implies a greater unity than the African American community and faith traditions have experienced in many years. As the community, families, individuals and the Black church heal from its trauma and brokenness, a culture of peace—shalom—will prevail. This will be known as creative transformation; the Kin-dom of God.

⁴⁶Jn 10:16 (NRSV).

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

Over the past twenty-five years, the African American community and population has been the object of numerous scientific studies. Much of this research has been sponsored and paid for by local, state, and federal government entities funding community based non-profit organization and higher educational institutions. Tangible incentives offered the targeted groups range from small amounts of cash, to gift cards to free professional services. Even though these studies have been scientifically designed and implemented, too often the people and situations studied had no say so in conclusions reached and subsequent actions derived from said research.

One of the methods of study that protect subjects from being used without their direct knowledge is Action Research. As the researcher of this project understands action research, it is an approach that requires the population being studied to be immersed in the process from beginning to end. Such involvement brings about self-identification and definition of the problem, the approach to resolution, empowerment of the group being studied, and acceptance or rejection of benefits or consequences.

Action research is uniquely well suited to the ministry project undertaken to impact the manifestation of domestic/intimate partner violence in the African American community and faith traditions. Much like transformative teaching and learning as conceptualized in Cranton's *Professional Development as Transformative Learning*:

*New Perspectives for Teachers of Adults*¹, action research promises participants the opportunity to learn and take action as a self-directed process. Action research is an egalitarian process allowing problem identification and prioritizing, collective movement, critical reflection, strategic planning and self-implementation on the part of the group studying themselves in process and milieu.

The project context is the African American faith community in Greater Long Beach and Southeast Los Angeles, California. In the researcher's 35 years experience as a domestic violence advocate, African American women suffer deadly violence from family members at rates that are markedly higher than for other racial groups. The church is often the first point of contact for parishioners experiencing family, legal, and other problems. Perception of and experiences with faith-based organizations can have a great impact on the resources victims seek and accept.

Domestic violence is under-addressed in faith-based organizations, seminary education, and many church leaders are ill equipped to offer counsel to members affected. Faith leaders too often lack understanding of the dynamics of abusive relationships and the impact on the lives of those involved within their own churches. As pastor and advocate, the writer is uniquely positioned to undertake a faith-based domestic violence project. The purpose of the project is to assist faith leaders develop prevention and intervention skills, enhance leadership capacity, and identify areas of public and doctrinal policy upon which to partner with secular advocates. Thereby a culture of peace in church, family, and community is fostered. Scripture holds believers accountable for being *repairers of the breach* and encourages Christians to be born again through the

¹Patricia Cranton, *Professional Development as Transformative Learning: New Perspectives for Teachers of Adults* (San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass), 50-117.

renewal of their minds. The desired outcome of the project is a stable network of secular and faith leaders engaging domestic violence prevention and intervention within the context of religious practice.

Hypothesis

Existing research is filled with examples of model outreach and educational programs that address domestic violence. Many theories identifying the sources of domestic and community violence are then applied to racial/ethnic minority cultures. The findings of the CASE Interfaith Domestic Violence Project suggests, however, that when it comes to reaching African Americans, a new paradigm may be needed. More specifically, there is a need to intervene in holistic ways that may involve non-traditional outreach methods, including but not limited to more effective use of faith-based interventions such as ritual, Bible study, gender specific spiritual groups and special worship services. When thinking about domestic violence in the context of African American lives, there must be attention paid to the whole person—including race, gender, culture, sexuality, environment and spirituality. The CASE project illustrates that it is not enough to have resources in the community if the community's leaders do not support or encourage use.

The hypothesis upon which the ministry project is based is that the greatest weapon in the prevention of domestic violence can be one's faith and community. Through the creation of a network of community members, supportive faith-based leaders and organizational partnership, such a group would be able to increase community awareness of domestic violence, engage the community in outreach efforts, and create tangible behavior change among limited numbers of faith-based leaders.

Ministry Project

The ministry project is known as A Faith-Based African American Network For Violence Free Relationships (ANFVR.)

Purpose

The persistent and intentional marginalization of women in the Black church, in particular, has lead to an intolerable and archaic silence about the disproportionately high levels of intimate partner violence which occurs in our families and our communities—many of whom comprise the membership of our faith communities. The many voices from all sectors of the African American community and enclaves of spirituality speaking through a variety of media employed by feminist advocates and womanist theologians, are demanding a just, transformational, and prophetic religious faith experience—one that will break the theological silence around sexual and domestic violence. The ultimate goal of this ministry is to advance a liberating and corrective ethos and praxis via the Black church, as one of the primary steps in creating a culture of peace in our families and communities.

Problem Statement and Research Design

Action research, the project methodology will utilize meetings, focus groups, surveys and knowledge transfer to transform behavior and stimulate systemic change. African Americans, especially women, suffer deadly violence from family members at rates that are markedly higher than for other racial groups in the United States —with the exception of American Indian women (U.S. Department of Justice, 2001). According to

estimates from the US Department of Justice, black females experience domestic violence at a rate 35% higher than that of white females, and about 22 times the rate of women of other races. Black males experienced domestic violence at a rate about 62% higher than that of white males and also 22 times the rate of men of other races.

The issue of domestic violence within the African American family is complicated by the effects of discrimination, economic marginalization, social inequity, and ongoing distrust of the criminal justice system. African American women who are victims of domestic violence may be unwilling to call the police because of the racial injustice many perceive from these institutions. Moreover, factors such as the persistent breakdown of African American families, and the perceptions that there are fewer male partner options caused by higher incarceration among African American males likely exacerbates the difficulty African American victims of domestic violence experience when attempting to escape family violence.

In a 2002 report by the Institute of Domestic Violence in the African American Community, several issues that place African American communities at increased risk are discussed. Among issues elucidated are a need for leadership and positive role models, competitiveness between those entrusted to address domestic violence creating a barrier against effective responses, and lack of comprehensive systemic solutions. Though just one report, the findings underscore the need for stable, trusted leadership to address domestic violence in black communities.

As an African American pastor and a thirty-five year domestic violence advocate, the researcher was well-positioned to undertake this faith-based domestic violence project focused on the African American community. However, all participants were committed

to the mission and vision of the project, professed to be people of faith, and had awareness that one of the products will be the utilization of project process and outcomes to enable the author to meet requirements for obtaining an academic degree. Other participants were free to use the network to pursue personal and professional goals that can further the power of the Network to create a culture of peace within the African American family, community and faith-based organizations. Meetings were facilitated by the researcher and a volunteer consultant who will periodically help the group self-evaluate; focus groups were conducted by the primary investigator/author and volunteers; community surveys were conducted by the primary investigator and volunteers; educational seminars were conducted by experts from the field and Professional Associates; content analysis was done by the researcher with guidance from qualified Context Associates.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE FIELD EXPERIENCE

The following is the Field Experience of the ministry project known as A Faith-based African-American Network for Violence-Free Relationships, which for purposes of this portion of the study will hereinafter be referred to as The Network. The Network evolved out of an effort by the Interval House CASE Interfaith Project Director/researcher to advance the activity of an ad hoc group of African American domestic violence advocates interested in a more purposeful role of creating a culture of peace in families and communities. The group agreed on a name and mission statement prior to February 27, 2009 meeting:

Who We Are: A Faith-Based African American Network for Violence Free Relationships is a “network” of African American advocates, faith leaders, scholars and other professionals committed to addressing domestic violence in the African American Community.

Mission: The African American Network for Violence Free Relationships is committed to promoting violence free relationships within the African American Community through education, advocacy and collaboration while encouraging leadership, moral and ethical accountability and culturally appropriate legislation, programs and services.

It was the conviction of the Network that domestic violence/intimate partner abuse plays an incubating role in the destructive violence occurring in our neighborhoods. Towards the end of decreasing the violent behavior and increasing models of a peaceful community and family culture, the Network agreed to collaborate with the CASE

Interfaith Project for purposes of embracing and implementing the mission of the Network.

Initial meetings were held in the Long Beach area at a United Methodist Church Social Hall. This venue is located in a small city adjacent to Long Beach and Los Angeles, freeway close and convenient to get to via freeway and public transportation. The researcher was the former pastor, so the group was welcomed by the current pastor and the church received a small monetary donation for use of space.

Initially, one hundred individuals were invited via E-vite to participate over the first six months of network-building. Among these individuals were experienced domestic violence advocates with a vested interest in the target community and the issue. Represented from the domestic violence advocacy movement were four African-American domestic violence shelter directors (Las Angelas, San Bernardino, Riverside and Orange Counties), former victims and perpetrators, administrators from two universities, representatives from social services, African American sorority and fraternity culture, two media persons, three physicians, retirees, youth, three African American clergy organizations and interested men and women from congregations and the general community.

Through an E-vite for the March 2009 meeting, the Network had hoped to establish a more diverse collaborative via vigorous outreach to the faith community for more participation of males, younger men and women and a more tangible commitment by a greater variety of faith leaders. The Network realized the challenges inherent in building a collaborative focused on intimate partner violence and abusive familial relationships. The historical barriers have lessened but have not been erased—i.e. power

and privilege of patriarchy, gender inequities, class differences, religious differences, cultural traditions, cultural and clinical trauma and post traumatic behaviors. It would be accurate to say that some success has been achieved in terms of the collaborative model and the need to utilize the faith community as a primary conduit for change.

The Network did expand its base—not as much as was envisioned, but perhaps what is a more sustainable change. Over the six month period, The Network grew to include persons from non-mainstream African American faith traditions—Jehovah's Witness; Church of Religious Science, Roman Catholic. Three youth and young adult males became involved. Domestic Violence advocates from Option House in San Bernardino County became active participants. The Los Angeles District of the United Methodist Church made a commitment to be more active. Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches (LAM)—a consortium of fifty small African American Christian congregations have sent a representative to meetings and The Ebony Prophets of the California Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church accommodated Network outreach efforts and invited the researcher to present information about the Network and future events in which The Ebony Prophets could participate. There was representation from the administration of California State University, Dominguez Hills and representatives from Delta Sigma Theta Sorority and Sigma Gamma Rho Sorority, Inc. These are strategic alliances bringing about a wider representation of the African American community in the Network.

The presence of representatives who are survivors of domestic violence and dating violence kept the Network tuned into its primary purpose. The vigorous outreach

has included contact with gatekeepers who have been given information which will increase capacity for prevention of domestic violence.

The format of monthly face to face meetings of the Network included but was not limited to the following: devotional reflection and prayer; a member check-in reminiscent of the process used by John Wesley in Class meetings, but limited to several minutes; old business; open discussion of pertinent current events from the field; committee reports; announcements; working lunch; new business.

There was a work plan that was shared with members at the first formal meeting which required approval and buy-in from the members of the Network. Both the tasks and results are listed in the following narrative.

The Network's focus identifying new leadership and building collaboration with a diverse group of people and organizations.

1. Recruit 20 additional members representing a broader representation of the African American community and its religious institutions. Each member of the Network as it previously existed committed to bringing at least one other person to the organization. This resulted in our initial meeting have and When we exhibited at community information and awareness events, we recruited potential members for the Network. (see appendix for marketing pieces)

2. Engage a consultant to train the group on how to develop and implement public policy. Researcher and other experienced Network member was utilized for work group meeting, and organizational development. The group was helped to identify committee structure and members within the Network and then had the committees work on 3 and 6 month plans.

3. Engage a consultant to train the group on how to influence and/or develop religious denominational and doctrinal policies. Researcher as clergy worked with the Network on identifying the legislative and polity groups of their various denominations. They were given examples of how to write a legislative resolution and steps to take in getting doctrine and policy on agendas.

4. Create and maintain a website for ANFVR. A discussion of media and marketing preceded the decision to secure a web site that could be managed by Network members and Americorp volunteers. The committee to handle content and look of the website was representative of faith leaders, youth/young adult, technical assistance from an academician with a doctoral degree in media and informational systems. The expert will also identify students from Cal-State Dominguez Hills for maintenance of the website under an Americorp agreement from CASE Interfaith Project.

5. Track through collaboration with CPEDV pertinent domestic violence legislation. CPEDV specific participation in the collaboration is happening thru the activity of a CPEDV board member who is part of the Network and a Southern Region member who is running unopposed for Regional Rep of the Southern region to CPEDV.

6. Seek financial support for sustainability of the Network. The issue of financial sustainability was not fully addressed by the Network and is part of the work yet to be done. The work group assigned to that task, favored a membership fee and fundraising.

7. Have a fundraiser during Domestic Violence Awareness Month. The Network made specific plans for a fund-raiser to be held October 17, 2009. The event was marketed as Calling All Men of Faith: A Day of Dialogue To End Violence Against Women. Ted Bunch co-founder of A CALL TO MEN out of New York, New York was the facilitator and keynote speaker. There was a charge for those able to pay and the Network received a gift of \$1,000.00. The Network partnered with a medical center—St. Mary—for a fee-free facility and sold ads in the event booklet for corporate underwriting from business, foundations, and churches for other expenses. The goal of getting 100 men and youth to attend was met and exceeded. There were also about 50 women present. (See appendix for press release and other marketing)

The Network made a decision about halfway through the project to abandon the idea of sending newer members to Sacramento to learn more about policy issues. It was decided that a better strategy at the time was to make registration scholarships available to those individuals to participate in the education to be offered in early August 2009, when the annual conference of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African

American Community (IDVAAC) convened in Long Beach on the 3rd and 4th of August. Additionally, two members of the Network did a workshop on Forgiveness and Letting Go and the Network had an exhibit, staffed by its members throughout the conference period. The Network was also able to persuade the Long Beach and the Los Angeles Districts of the United Methodist Church to provide an additional twelve registration scholarships for clergy, youth/young adults, and survivors.

CHAPTER SIX

REFLECTION, SUMMARY, AND CONCLUSION

A Faith-based African American Network for Violence-Free Relationships (ANFVR) is a pioneering *network* of African American advocates, faith leaders, survivors, scholars and other professionals committed to addressing sexual and domestic violence in the African American community. The mission of ANFVR is to promote violence-free relationships within the African American community through education, advocacy and collaboration while encouraging leadership, moral and ethical accountability and culturally appropriate legislation, programs and services.

There is increased awareness of domestic violence as an African American community issue; there is the beginning of some acceptance of the hypocrisy of domestic violence being only a women's issue. African American men and women are seeing a critical role for non-perpetrating men to play in ending violence against women. There is acceptance of the church's culpability on the part of younger and/or more enlightened clergy and parishioners for the centuries of silence about sexual and domestic violence in the Black community.

This acceptance of responsibility was recently demonstrated during the controversy surrounding the Chris Brown and Rihanna domestic violence criminal case. In spite of young women of all ethnicities making excuses for Chris Brown's behavior and victim blaming, African American men knew and articulated his behavior as being

inappropriate. The researcher believes there was some communal guilt being expressed because Chris grew up without his biological father present and under the influence of a step-father who was abusive to his mother. This again is an example of the incubating phenomena of domestic violence. The Black church has in the past nurtured and parented at risk children in a way that created grounded resilient adult men and women. Therefore one of the assumptions one could make after spending six months building the Network is that the Black church and African American males have not met the ethical and moral challenge of embracing fatherless children. There are some men trying to change that situation.

One of the most exciting events to occur during the six months was the Network's planned Domestic Violence Awareness Month observance—Calling All Men of Faith to a Day of Dialogue to End Violence Against Women. A summary of that event follows.

Calling All Men Of Faith Seminar Marks A First In The Nation, was the headline of one press release recounting the DV Awareness month event created by the Network to more formally launch its presence in the community and to challenge African American men and boys of faith to become allies in the efforts to end gender based violence against women and girls. The account of this event is placed at the end of the study because it was the last event in the six month period of Network building. It also is a demonstration of what can be achieved through Action Research via networking, collaborating, underwriting and planning.

The Network knew in the early months of 2009 that it wanted to have an event in October that would greatly increase the visibility and mission of the Network—an event that would seek a greater involvement of men and youth from the faith community. The

Network became intentional about reaching out to groups with black male—youth and adult—constituents. The most responsive groups were The Role of Men Academy, responsible for teaching expectant or new fathers how to be more effective parents and participants in the community in relationship to their children; 100 Black Men of Long Beach who are effectively mentoring black male youth and prescribing to practices which encourage health and wholeness among African Americans. South Bay Bright Future Group Homes and Foster Family Agency places abused, neglected and abandoned children in foster homes and has group homes for adolescent boys. The organization was founded by and is administered by African American United Methodist Clergypersons. Network became members of the Role of Men Collaborative for Effective Parenting and 100 Black Men of Long Beach assigned one of their members to be their liaison with the Network. As mentioned earlier, Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches (LAM) has a representative as a member of the Network. LAM has asked the Network to participate in their conferences for Clergy, especially when the focus is on women's issues. The Network fostered a relationship with Bright Futures, which resulted in the boys (aged 12-18) in the group home, participating in the Seminar by having to complete the day and write a paper. They were incentivized with the promise of a twenty-five dollar bonus. These efforts and commitments ahead of time, benefitted the Network on the day of the Call to Men with outstanding numbers of these men and boys attending.

On October 17, 2009, the African American Network for Violence-Free Relationships hosted *Calling All Men: A Day of Dialogue To End Violence Against Women*, a milestone event that was characterized by special guest U.S. Congresswoman Laura Richardson, Congressional Black Caucus member, as the first gathering of its kind

in the nation to successfully convene a higher percentage of men than women. Of the more than 150 people who attended, nearly 75 percent were men who participated in a day of dialogue, education, and visioning aimed at creating a culture of peace. The unprecedented daylong event, which included breakfast and lunch, was underwritten by Interval House Crisis Shelters and St. Mary Medical Center's Families In Good Health. The educational sessions were led by internationally recognized keynote speaker and workshop leader, Ted Bunch, who is co-founder of New York-based A Call To Men: The National Association of Men and Women Committed to Ending Violence Against Women.

Bunch led a dynamic discussion of the complexities and troubles of socialization, which results in the creation of a *man box* that encourages sexism and violence against women. Bunch also touched upon issues of perpetrator accountability, intervention strategies, youth leadership development, and the role of parents. Participant comments included:

- He did an excellent job of demonstrating that the culture of domestic violence is a learned behavior for children, and stressing to parents that they need to be aware that violent conduct in the home is perceived by children; it's absorbed, passed along, and emulated
- "It was a tremendous event," Armstrong adds. "It was great to see so many men, particularly young men, turning out a Saturday morning for an event centered on domestic violence. I think it's indicative of change in our attitudes about domestic violence. Men are beginning to realize that it is a significant issue for them because men are generally the perpetrators of domestic violence."
- "Calling All Men of Faith" was held as a way to observe Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Because domestic violence is an incubator for many other forms of violence in our community, especially in the African American community. It becomes increasingly critical to provide a forum for men to engage in

efforts to create a culture of peace in their homes and communities, says ANFVR co-founder Rev. Mary L. Walton.

Long Beach Vice Mayor Val Lerch, who shared his childhood experiences with domestic violence, attended the seminar, as did a diverse group of men and youth from several community organizations, including The Role of Men Academy, the EM3 youth group from St. Mary Medical Center's Families in Good Health, faith communities, and domestic violence agencies.

Howard Perry of 100 Black Men of Long Beach served as Honorary Chairperson for the event, and Rev. Luther B. Keith, pastor at Central Baptist Church of Inglewood, California received a special award honoring his extensive work in preventing violence against women. Rev. Keith has done for 20 years what most of the faith community is just beginning to do now. He is a role model for other clergy and faith leaders to emulate.

For the women in attendance, the afternoon session featured a viewing of *Sin by Silence*, a compelling film documenting the stories of women who have been imprisoned for killing their batterers in self defense. The film resonated with the women in the room, who included survivors, advocates, and community activists. There were many survivors in the room who felt that it could have been them who were imprisoned. Fortunately, they were able to find resources that were available to them, and therefore were able to escape that fate. The day culminated with a powerful pledge by all the men in attendance to end violence against women.

About The African American Network For Violence-Free Relationships

The African American Network for Violence-Free Relationships (ANFVR) is committed to promoting violence-free relationships within the African American

community through education, advocacy and collaboration while encouraging leadership, moral and ethical accountability and culturally appropriate legislation, programs and services.

ANFVR consists of approximately 20 member organizations across the state representing a broad spectrum of the public and private sectors, including social service and nonprofit agencies, faith leaders, interested community members, academia, survivors of violence, and community advocates. The Network is a byproduct of Interval House's *Creating A Safe Environment*, a model demonstration project in the faith community, and the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community's 2007 national conference in Long Beach, which encouraged participants to develop a *contract* with the greater community to end domestic violence.

The researcher, as founding Executive Director of Interval House and local host of IDVAAC 2007 national conference took the challenge to heart to develop a contract with the community but also to begin to explore ways to pass on thirty years of experience and knowledge about domestic violence advocacy to emerging youthful leaders.

From several months of discussion and reflection came an understanding that violence in the African American community is not random acts of violence; rather, they are often the result of a cycle of community and personal instability emerging from intimate partner, sexual and family violence, substance abuse, and cultural trauma.

Another way of appropriating the chaos theory referred to in Frank Yamada's lecture, *Rape Narratives as Cultural Critique*.¹

Thus, the researcher sought to engage the broader community as ANFVR—including faith leaders, teachers, and community leaders – in a two-fold mission to (1) spread the message of a culture of peace; and (2) create a new generation of allies and leaders.

Towards those objectives, the Network has partnered with Interval House in responding to an OVW request for concepts To Engage Men and Boys as Allies with Women and Girls to Prevent Sexual and Domestic Violence. Invited to be part of this concept is 100 Black Men of Long Beach, Los Angeles Metropolitan Churches, Long Beach District of the United Methodist Church, The Role of Men Collaborative. At this writing, OVW has not announced awards. However, the Network is committed to engaging men as allies and will submit the concept to other funders.

Transformed Minds Repair the Breach

More than ever, the six months of Network activity has convinced the members that transformation of both faith and secular community will occur through receiving the knowledge and leadership development that the Network has made available and will continue to offer to church leaders, DV advocates, community advocates, youth groups, allied men's organizations, clergy organizations, educational institutions, social and fraternal organizations, health and wellness institutions. The capacity for change and

¹Frank Yamada, "Rape Narratives as Cultural Critique: A Literary-Cultural Interpretation of Rape Texts in the Hebrew Bible", Sabbatical Lecture Presented at Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary on April 23, 2008.

transformation is not something to hoard or withhold, but to offer generously and enthusiastically to all who would be repairers of the breaches existing in African American urban communities and communities of faith that have been silent too long. There are younger men and women ready to receive the mantle and respond to the call to become the next generation to repair the breach, to have their minds renewed through the gospel of Jesus Christ and his radical ethic of love. The African American community—including the church—will succumb to violence, hubris, the crisis of values and ethics if there is failure to offer and receive the transformation offered through authentic worship, acquisition of knowledge and rejection of the failed ethics and values of this present generation.

Neither the Network nor the researcher will be discouraged by the disappointing numbers of male clergy involved thus far. Their lay members are hearing and acting on the message and the alternative the Network is delivering. The Network has learned that the Body of Christ has a powerful role for laity (church laity are described *as the sleeping giant* in the book, *Confronted by God: The Essential Verna Dozier*²) to play in assisting the ministries of which they are part. Laity is accepting that role. The researcher is inspired and encouraged by this phenomenon among men and women in some of the mainstream faith denominations and some of the independent faith communities. Many of these lay people are retired professionals who now have time to do Bible study and other ministries in the church. The researcher, in looking towards the near future as a time of formal retirement from secular employment, continues to hearken to the call to of the Network, to prepare written information for educational purposes, to continue in

²Cynthia Shattuck and Fredrica Harris Thompsett, eds, *Confronted by God: The Essential Verna Dozier* (New York, NY: Seabury Books, 2006), 37.

ministry in some fashion that provides a platform for peacemaking within individuals, family, church and community.

APPENDIX A
faces of violence newspaper articles

APPENDIX A
FACES OF VIOLENCE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

Orange County Register Document

Thursday, April 22, 2010 8:01 AM

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The Orange County Register

June 12, 2002

Friends grieve for family shot dead // Tragedy - Murder-suicide leaves mourners to remember popular teen-ager and family influential in the black church community.

Author: SUSAN GILL VARDON, JIM RADCLIFFE and MAGDA LISZEWSKA

Edition: 1

Section: Local

Page: Cover

Dateline: LAKE FOREST

Article Text:

LAKE FOREST

Thomas Lewis Turner used a .357-caliber revolver to fire a single shot into the head of his wife, two shots at his 15-year-old nephew, one at his 22-month-old daughter in her crib and, finally, one into his own chest, officials said Tuesday.

The murder-suicide shook one of the leading families in the Orange County black church community. Dead are Acedra Renae Turner, the stepdaughter of the founder of an influential Santa Ana church, her husband, and their nephew, Broderick Turner.

The couple's toddler daughter was in critical but stable condition Tuesday after a bullet passed through her chest, missing vital organs, officials said. Family members, who said they were too distraught to comment, continued a vigil for the girl at Children's Hospital at Mission Viejo.

The deaths left people mourning across the county.

Students at El Toro High School remembered their friend, freshman Broderick Turner, on Tuesday by releasing white and blue balloons, lighting candles, hugging and crying. The memorials started in the morning at the school and continued later in the day with about a dozen students strolling from school to hang out on the sidewalk in front of his empty condominium. Through sniffles they talked about an upbeat, friendly teen whose vibrant life was cut short by violence.

“He's probably wondering why we're crying,” freshman Nicole Garcia said at the high school. “He's probably saying 'I'm teaching God how to crip walk and dance. He would want us to be happy because he's in a better place.'”

Sheriff's spokesman Jim Amormino said neighbors in the Cedar Glen condominiums on Trabuco Road still insist they didn't hear gunshots. “I think this was a shock to everybody,” Amormino said.

Sheriff's officials and neighbors said the Turners were having marital problems and talked about separating. One former neighbor said Acedra Turner had told her that her husband was “too controlling.”

Broderick was adopted by Thomas Turner's mother and had been living with Thomas and Acedra Turner for several years. The boy's birth mother did not want custody of her son, officials said.

He played on the freshman football team and planned to play sophomore baseball, friends said.

At the silent morning memorial at El Toro High School, tears flowed as the teen-agers recalled Broderick Turner's constant smile, his friendly demeanor and devotion to his friends.

They also struggled to comprehend their loss. Many who had visited Turner's house described his family as nice and friendly. But they also remembered Thomas Turner “as kind of strict.”

Jacob Smith, 14, recalled Broderick saying that his uncle was strict so he would not get in trouble and get hurt.

Turner often talked about his family, said classmate Wendy Taylor. In fact, during an eighth-grade presentation he said that his hobby was spending time with his family, she said.

Seth Thomas created his own memorial for his friend, who he said liked to talk about sports and girls. On his left biceps was written in ink: “In loving memory of Broderick Turner,” decorated with a heart.

The Turners were active members of St. James Missionary Baptist Church in Santa Ana. Acedra Turner was an usher; her husband a deacon who was also active in the children's ministry; and Broderick sang in the choir.

Acedra Turner's stepfather, Richard Kessee Jr., founding pastor of the church in the early 1980s, is well-known in the area's black church community. He retired in November, receiving a proclamation from the city of Santa Ana.

It was Kessee's wife, Freddie Kessee, who called sheriff's officials Monday morning after she didn't hear from her daughter and failed to locate Broderick Turner at high school and the girl through her baby sitter.

At the school, El Toro students were leaving money to help the girl.

Different students took to standing guard over the growing pile of cash and several watches that students took off and donated. It was unclear how much had been raised Tuesday. "Everybody was just chipping in," freshman Samantha Thomas said. "Everybody was pulling out whatever they had, like even 25 cents. I put in \$4; that's all I had."

Today, the students said they plan to gather at lunch on the football field to release red and blue balloons -- Broderick's favorite colors -- with "3" on them, the number he wore on his jersey.

Contact Vardon at (949) 454-7356 or svardon@ocregister.com

Broderick Turner

Thomas Turner

Acedra Turner

Caption:

El Toro student Nikki Rice wears a shirt in tribute to Broderick Turner during a memorial Tuesday

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The Orange County Register

June 23, 2002

Family man's fatal flaw // Mystery - Father who killed his wife, nephew and then himself takes secret life to the grave.

Author: SUSAN GILL VARDON and JIM RADCLIFFE

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Section: News

Page: Cover

Article Text:

Thomas Lewis Turner was a man with secrets. He took the biggest one to his grave. The memorial services are over, the flowers, notes and candles cleared from the doorstep of the Turner family's Lake Forest condominium. And still, family and friends agonize over what possessed the 38-year-old loan officer to shoot and kill his wife, Acedra Renae Turner, and his 15-year-old nephew, Broderick, wound his 22-month-old daughter, Alycia, and then kill himself.

Who was he, really?

The man everyone called Lewis was a well-respected neighbor who knew everybody by name, mentored young people and had words of wisdom ready for anyone who would listen.

But in the days after the June 10 murder-suicide, another portrait of Lewis emerged. He hid a son -- Thomas Lewis Turner Jr., now 17 -- from his wife and her family. He stayed out late at night. And he twisted his own family history to hide the alarming similarities to what happened in Lake Forest two weeks ago.

"There were two sides to him," said Freddie Kessee, Renae's mother. "The other side we had no idea of."

CHURCHGOING MAN

Neighbors and friends are still baffled by the murder-suicide. To them, the Turners were the personification of the perfect family -- loving and churchgoing.

"I don't know anybody who did not love him and his whole family," said Marilyn Rice, a longtime neighbor whose daughter, Marie, sought Turner's advice through high school and college.

"Marie just graduated from UCLA and was supposed to have lunch with him," Rice said. Lewis was a strict but concerned father, neighbors say. He dressed impeccably, was outgoing and helpful -- offering to carry groceries or give a pep talk.

He was finance committee chairman and Sunday school leader at the family's church, St. James Missionary Baptist Church in Santa Ana.

Renae was shy but friendly. A former track star, she had a wonderful laugh and was a loving mother, neighbors and family say. She would give you a 5-pound bag when you asked for a cup of sugar.

She ushered at St. James church, which her stepfather, the retired Rev. Richard Kessee, founded.

Broderick, Lewis' nephew, was a well-mannered and happy-go-lucky teen who loved wrestling shows and video games and played wide receiver on the El Toro High School freshman football team.

And they all seemed to dote on Alycia, the Turners' 22-month-old daughter, who counts Barney and Winnie-the-Pooh as favorites and would rather run than walk.

Then the unspeakable happened.

Sometime between 7 and 8 a.m. June 10, Lewis took a .357 handgun and shot his wife in the head. He went to Broderick, shooting him twice. He went to Alycia's crib, put a pillow over her and shot once into her chest. He aimed a final, fatal shot into his own chest.

Alycia recovered and went from the hospital to the Kessee's Aliso Viejo home Thursday. The bullet passed through her body, missing her heart and other vital organs by centimeters. The Kessees are petitioning the court for custody of the girl.

The shootings "freak us out," said Lewis' sister, Gwen Turner, who lives in his hometown of Greenville, Miss. "Lewis was a churchgoing man and always talked about the Lord and how good God was. What made him flip like that?"

Lewis and Renae were married nine years. But in the weeks before he turned the gun on his family, the couple agreed to divorce, Freddie Kessee said.

Renae and Broderick were chafing under Lewis' controlling nature, Freddie Kessee said. And Lewis was away, out late, many nights, she said.

But she declined to say exactly why her daughter wanted a divorce. "She finally decided she'd had enough," Kessee said.

"When Renae told me they agreed to have a divorce, I tried to put a fear in her it might not be good to stay," she said.

"I tried to get her to see all might not be well, but she didn't have the fear."

SECRET SON

Students at El Toro High School held three teary memorials for Broderick. He came to live with the Turners in the sixth grade. His mother couldn't raise him. An aunt took a turn and then his grandmother -- and Lewis's mother -- adopted the boy.

Broderick's friends strung a banner across the Turner condominium and continued to visit to say their goodbyes late last week.

"He was such a great person, always smiling, never had anything bad to say about anybody," said a tearful Nikke Rice, one of Broderick's longtime friends.

While Lewis treated Broderick like a son, he was an inconsistent father to the 17-year-old Gardena boy who bears his name, Thomas Lewis Turner Jr.

Renae's family only learned of the young man after the June 10 shootings.

"We didn't know about him," said Barbara Cook, Renae's sister.

Lewis owed \$20,000 in back child support to Necie Brinkley, the boy's mother.

The two met in 1983 when they worked at a Wendy's restaurant, and separated when the boy was 15 months old.

Lewis saw the boy over the years, but only sporadically, Brinkley said.

"He was a serious guy, all about business, always giving words of wisdom and advice to my son to be the best individual he could be," Brinkley said.

"But he didn't pay child support like he should," said Brinkley, who took Lewis to court in 1994 to force payment. "There were times he would disappear."

Renae's family knew about another son, now 16 and living in Florida. The boy frequently visited the Turners.

It seemed the bank officer who helped others with their money for a living was not very successful at handling his own, family member say.

"Lewis' checks were always garnished to child support," said Renae's sister, Barbara Cook, 33, of Santa Ana. "Renae paid most of the bills."

FAMILY VIOLENCE

When it came to telling the straight story about his family, Lewis was no more successful than he was in handling personal finances.

This is the story he told: His older brother, Robert, was murdered in his hometown of Greenville, Miss. But the truth is startlingly similar to the events of June 10.

On the evening of Dec. 31, 1993, his older brother, Robert Turner, fired a single shot from a .38-caliber revolver into his girlfriend's head before shooting himself in the chest, said Maj. Laverne Simpson of the Greenville Police Department. Martha Peoples, 48, died along with Robert Turner, 35.

"She was getting his clothes together," Simpson said. "She was breaking off from him." Just like Lewis, Robert Turner was the last fellow anyone would have guessed would turn violent.

"He was a real personable individual," said Brad Jones, now Greenville's director of public works. "You would never have guessed he had any demons like that."

While Renae's family is reeling from Lewis' violent turn, they can't help but wonder if things could have been different if they had known the truth about his brother's murder-suicide.

"What can you say now?" Cook said. "There is something dysfunctional going on -- whether it's genetics or what went on in their childhood."

The Turner family matriarch, Savannah Turner, 66, is struggling to understand, too. From her Long Beach senior-complex apartment she spoke lovingly of baby Alycia's miraculous survival. But she declined to talk much about her family history, other than to say it was happy.

"I don't want to talk no more about nothing," she said. "I don't want to get emotional. But (Lewis) was a good son. He was a churchgoing man."

Gwen Turner, his sister, was more outspoken.

"When I heard about it, I thought, 'He didn't want anybody to have his family,'" said Turner, who raised Broderick from age 2 to 7.

"He did not have to go in that room and kill them."

Cook speculates that Lewis may have tried to elude his own demons with all his advice for others.

"He always wanted to be involved in everybody's life," Cook said. "As far as I know, a lot of times people think if they are helping people with their problems then they don't have a problem themselves."

She doubts she'll ever discover Lewis' biggest secret -- why he pulled the trigger five times the morning of June 10.

"Unless we find a suicide note," she said, sadly, "we'll never know."

Staff writers Greg Hardesty, Magda Liszewska and Nancy Luna contributed to this story
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A trust account has been created for Alycia Turner. The address is: Trust Account 273929, c/o Cal-Cen Federal Credit Union, 1140 N. Gilbert St., Anaheim 92801

Caption:

Thomas Lewis Turner, bottom left, shot his wife, top left, nephew, top right, and daughter before killing himself.

An investigator photographs the Turner home after the June 10 murder-suicide

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Article regarding Pastor Killed by police

http://www.lafocusnewspaper.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=76&Itemid=1

L.A. Pastor Killed By Police: What Went Wrong?

Some believe that Damon K. Hill knew he was going to die on the morning of March 9, 2010. Unofficial reports were that as he'd left home early that morning, in full view on a table were his license and credit cards and that he had told at least one person that he'd already made provisions for his services.



Hours after his death, after the coroner had finally removed the body, DaMeka Hill-Posado began to retrace her father's steps, back to the house he lived in and even the bed he'd slept in, trying to get a feel for what might have been going on in his mind and could have led the former pastor of the First Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church and the Grace to You Bible Church to shoot his estranged wife four times. An action that would result in his dying on the cold pavement of a Gardena street at approximately 7:45am on the morning of March 9, 2010 with a fatal gunshot wound, stunning not only the Los Angeles

church community but catching even his family and most intimate friends by surprise.

Hours earlier eyewitness accounts had him chasing his estranged wife, 31-year old Summer Hill, an L.A. Unified District teacher's assistant, down a Gardena street as he shot at her.

Summer Hill had been hit in the upper torso when she ran screaming from the garage of the Gardena apartment building on Western Avenue where he'd first confronted her and jumped over a locked fence to get away.

According to Gardena Police Department reports, she also tried to get into a locked car to escape before seeking refuge in a white pickup truck that was parked at a nearby curb. A woman sitting on the passenger side of the truck removed the keys out of the ignition, thinking it was a carjacking.

Hill was then observed walking up to the truck and firing several shots at his estranged wife, who by then had jumped out of the vehicle and began once again running south on Western. By that time police had arrived on scene, and after chasing him through a parking lot, stopping only when they came to a wall, Hill was ordered to drop his gun. Instead, authorities say he intermittently raised the gun to his head and then toward the officers.

"Then," according to Lt. Liam Gallagher of the sheriff's homicide bureau, "One of the officers felt threatened and fired three shots."

Hit in the head and upper body, Hill died on the spot.

During the course of the chase, Summer Hill had been struck by bullets at least three times in the shoulder, chest and stomach and was taken to County Harbor-UCLA Medical Center where she was hospitalized in critical condition. She has since undergone a series of surgeries and remains hospitalized.

News traveled swiftly in L.A.'s African American church community leaving many without words and all wondering what must have gone wrong for the 48-year old Hill, once a promising young pastor, to have died on the streets in such a manner.

"It's shocking," said Rev. Jonathan Moseley, who had known Hill since 2003 and had preached for him on occasion.

"I can't imagine what he was going through that would lead him to such an action. Every time I saw him, he appeared to be fine, though I hadn't seen him in a while. But it's a bad reflection on the L.A. church community that one of its brethren went out like that. That we couldn't have seen it coming or stopped it."

"I was shocked and devastated because he was a fellow colleague," said Rev. Xavier Thompson of Southern Missionary Baptist Church, "and though I did not have direct friendship with him, he belonged to the fraternity of the brethren."

None were more surprised than Rev. Melvin Hill, senior pastor of New Pleasant Hill Baptist Church—the church Damon Hill had been reared in—and a surrogate father.

"I couldn't move for a couple of days because for me he wasn't just a guy passing by, I loved him. I still really can't put it together in my spirit," said Hill, who had counseled Hill on the troubles he'd had with the impending divorce.

"I said, son, you've had two former wives. What is it about this one that you can't let go? You've got to let it go. And he said, okay, I can do that."

"Something must have happened that Monday. That's all I can see that would have triggered this. He was nice...loving."

Of the reports that Hill could be a little hot-tempered, the Rev. Melvin Hill countered, "I'd heard that, but he didn't show that side to me. "He saw me as a father...a godfather," the pastor continued. "I ordained and licensed him to preach and had known him since he was nine. We would talk about everything."

"Something must have happened that Monday," he repeated, shaking his head as if still in disbelief. "I'd love to know what happened because when they called me they said his room was a mess and that wasn't like Damon."

It is a sentiment shared by Rev. Melvin King, a close friend of Hill's and a speaker at his funeral. "I don't know what was said or what was done and we may never know, but I just believe that something happened the night before. Even the witnesses said, he just didn't look the same. He had a blank look on his face."

Both pastors were right according to daughter DaMeka Hill-Posado, the last person who'd spoken to him just minutes before the incident. He'd sent her a text message early that morning that read simply: "Summer crossed the line"

"I didn't get the text until I woke up and I immediately called him and said, what did she do and he said, 'you don't want to know.' He was going to call me back, at which time I would have done all I could to calm him down, but the next call that I got was someone telling me my father was dead.

"Nobody knows the pressure that I'm under believing that I could have called and maybe intervened. We all tried to get together to keep him busy and motivated, but the day before he was at lunch with a friend of mine and she said, he'd received a package from Summer and his whole demeanor changed.

"We haven't been able to find that Fedex envelope, but whatever happened I believe had something to do with what was in it."

"I don't justify violence and my father was not a violent man. The divorce was very stressful for all of us, but I know my father better than anybody and he will fight for those things that are important to him."

Hill, who grew up one of six children in South Central Los Angeles, became licensed to preach at the age of 13. The twice-divorced father of three, who enjoyed a 4.0 grade point average while at Locke High, took his first ministry job in 1998 at Double Rock Baptist Church under Rev. E. Joshua Sims. A year later he was offered the position of pastor at First Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church.

L.A. Focus profiled Hill in 2000, just six months after he'd accepted his first pastorate.

"If you would have come to me last year and told me I was going to be a pastor of First Goodwill Missionary Baptist Church in Los Angeles I would have said, 'no I don't think so,' but my thoughts are not God's thoughts and my ways are not his ways," he'd said in that interview. "Instead, what happened was the Lord had me in a process where I couldn't get comfortable in any field but the ministry. At United Airlines, I had free travel benefits, which I just thought were awesome. I used all of the benefits, but He wouldn't let me stay happy in any field."

Aside from the travel industry, Hill had stints as an L.A. county sheriff, a UPS parcel handler, and a city inspector for the city of Hawthorne under the housing authority.

"What I learned was that my personal life didn't really mean anything in terms of how what I wanted to do. I had to understand that God already had my life mapped out and it's hard to really except those things until He puts you into it."

But things had gone terribly wrong for the pastor who once said, "My biggest strength is my character and that means that if God tells me to do it, I'll do it."

After his tenure with First Goodwill, Damon Hill went on to establish the Grace To You Bible Church in 2001. When, several years later, a raise in the lease made keeping the location cost-prohibitive, he temporarily merged his membership with Atherton Baptist Church in Hawthorne, and was in the midst of relaunching the congregation when he passed.

Edith Simpson, who worked with Hill at the House of Winston Mortuary in the days and months preceding his death, said it upsets her to think about what happened.

"We're still in limbo as to what triggered him to do what he did. I understood that he was going through a divorce, but we didn't go into depth about his personal life. He was upset and kind of quiet about that, but he took his calling very seriously."

"Before we would leave on funeral services, he would always say let's all get together for prayer and we had an employee that passed and Damon would have us come together and have prayer on this employee's behalf as well."

"The inner portion of man we don't see," Simpson reflected. "One thing I ponder is that of all the people he was surrounded by on a daily basis—all of us who work together as Christians—that none of us were able to reach that inner man. He hid it from all of us. That bothers me and keeps me emotional, but I pray that he has made his peace."

"The last conversation I had with Damon was Saturday before he died, he told me he was going to be off work, but that if I needed him to work in the evenings, he would be available and I was scheduling him for a service last Friday, but unfortunately, he was not able to fulfill it."

Fact is, some do believe that the circumstances that left Damon Keith Hill on the cold pavement of a Gardena Street from a fatal gunshot wound may have nearly as much to do with a church community that saw him fall through the cracks.

"I knew Hill knew more pastors than this because I ran in the same circles, so I'm cutting a whole lot of them loose," said Rev. Melvin King at the funeral.

"How dare you judge somebody? King continued. "Everybody sins, no matter how big."

When pressed about what he meant with the statement, King said, "I believe a lot of pastors didn't want to touch the situation and I think relationships should go further than someone making a mistake. Damon was my friend. I could have easily turned my back on the situation, but I don't think we should disown people."

"With all due respect, he doesn't know what warranted the absence of pastors," said one minister—who preferred to remain anonymous—of King's statements at the funeral.

"There were conflicting reports of when and where the funeral was. I didn't even know it was going on. It was just an unfortunate matter. I don't believe it was a case of people turning on Hill. I don't think anyone knew all that was going on."

Indeed, pastors in crisis may find themselves in a dilemma when reaching out for help.

"Pastors having someone to vent to, confide in without fear of violation of confidentiality is a reality," observed Rev. Xavier Thompson, "but we don't know if that's what happened here. We will never know. That's why we must not sit in the seat of judgment."

"As pastors we have to deal with a lot, especially when you're a pastor that has the heart of the people," King said. "When people come to you with stuff, you pray with them, but often you carry it as well. Some of my members have come to me with stuff and despite my faith and conviction, I go home with their stuff and have to deal with my own challenges as well."

"I think Damon was very saddened about giving up the church, the cancer, then going through a bitter divorce and it all took a toll on him and it was too much. It just lets me know we all have a snapping point. No matter how much religion you have, people and circumstances can take us there."

"It doesn't justify what was done and if he would have lived, I would have told him that he was wrong, but that was not the Damon I knew."

In the weeks since the incident, the friends of Summer Hill, have banded together to coordinate a series of fundraisers at South Bay restaurants to help offset the medical

expenses incurred with the expenses not covered by her insurance as she recovers.

Close friend Stacey Stewart said that Hill—who was staying with her mother while divorcing her husband and reportedly caught up in a bitter dispute over who would get the house they shared in their five-year marriage—had not been cheating.

A facebook site, Help summer heal, set up to help with the fundraising effort, shows a well-loved woman with the fortitude and support to overcome the tragic ordeal.

Posted on the website was this note from a friend: God's favor is upon Summer! I spent time with my girl yesterday in Beverly Hills while she was doing her physical therapy and she wanted me to share this with all of you. "She thanks you all for your prayers and support! She still has a long road ahead but she's not giving up! She's such an inspiration; I was teary-eyed watching her struggle through the pain but she's determined to get well enough to shake that spot! For those who still question if there is a God, It's evident in His works."

At the funeral service, Hill's daughter from a previous marriage, Da Meka Hill-Rosado revealed that the days following her father's death had been "difficult and chaotic."

"My father gave all he had to everything he tried to do. In life," she paused, "we all make mistakes. From those mistakes, come learning."

Article regarding Police Chief

Abuse Inquiry Targets Pasadena's Ex-Chief

The girlfriend of former Police Department head accused him of beating her but later recanted. He is now living in Virginia and has declined to comment.

May 5, 1995

By RICHARD WINTON AND CHIP JACOBS□Special to the Times

The Los Angeles County district attorney's office is conducting a criminal investigation into whether recently departed Pasadena Police Chief Jerry A. Oliver repeatedly beat his girlfriend while serving as the city's top police official.

The girlfriend subsequently recanted her allegations that Oliver abused her at least seven times between October, 1993, and June, 1994. The description of the physical abuse is contained in a summarized police report obtained by The Times.

Oliver, who resigned from his Pasadena post last month to become police chief of Richmond, Va., declined to comment through a city official there.

In Pasadena, City Manager Philip A. Hawkey said he was aware of the district attorney's probe and has informed City Council members.

"Jerry told me about this last fall," Hawkey said.

Citing policy, a district attorney's spokeswoman refused to confirm or deny whether there

is an investigation of Oliver. However, Pasadena's acting city attorney, Cristina L. Sierra, said she had been in recent contact with prosecutors and confirmed the probe is taking place.

Three years ago, Oliver's fourth wife accused him of repeated physical abuse and electronic surveillance during their 14-month marriage, according to divorce records filed in court. Jackie Oliver also made a 911 "family disturbance" call to Pasadena police in the fall of 1991. Oliver denied her allegations.

Oliver, 48, was a popular figure during his four-year stint in Pasadena. Among other achievements, he was credited with pioneering a community policing program and the country's first ammunition registration law.

According to the police report, Oliver struck his girlfriend with his fist, causing a facial injury. In another confrontation listed in the report, she claimed that Oliver hurt her so badly that she needed medical treatment, including a neck brace.

The report said that, in a separate incident, Oliver squeezed the woman's hand so tightly it bled, and that he verbally and mentally abused her throughout their relationship. The alleged abuse occurred during a seven-month period at Oliver's Pasadena house, the Ritz-Carlton Huntington Hotel and other unspecified locations, the report said.

The girlfriend's name was not mentioned in the records obtained by The Times, but Hawkey confirmed that she was the alleged victim.

The girlfriend, a county health worker, did not return several phone calls seeking comment. Sources familiar with the probe said she has refused to help the district attorney's office prosecute the case. Last summer she contacted police about the alleged beatings but has since recanted the allegations, according to Pasadena officials and police records.

However, even if the victim in a criminal case does not file charges or declines to cooperate, authorities can still file charges. In such cases, prosecutors can rely on medical records, eyewitness accounts and other evidence.

Several Pasadena City Council members said they were stunned by the 1- to 2-year-old allegations and were unhappy that they were not told about it by city officials until this week.

"It's unfortunate something like this wasn't told to the entire council. We should have been briefed with more efficiency," Councilman Chris Holden said.

Councilman William Crowfoot said he learned of the domestic violence claims only after recent media inquiries and knew nothing about the district attorney's investigation. Hawkey "didn't tell me this last fall," Crowfoot said.

Hawkey said the Oliver matter was a personnel issue and thus a confidential one. Because of that, Hawkey, who has authority to hire and fire the police chief, said he told only the mayor and the mayor pro tem.

In Virginia, Richmond City Manager Robert Bobb said Oliver told him he had had problems with his girlfriend but did not mention a criminal investigation. "We have to discuss these issues with Mr. Oliver," Bobb said. "If there is something wrong, file charges against him. Don't let it drag out and ruin a person's reputation."

Pasadena officials have refused to release the full June police report, and only confirmed the district attorney's probe Thursday.

On April 4, City Atty. Sierra said the only domestic violence incident she knew about involving Oliver and the girlfriend was a January telephone call to police from a person outside the city asking officers to check on the girlfriend's "welfare" at Oliver's home. No police report was ever filed in that case. On April 20—one day before Oliver left his Pasadena job—Sierra released the summarized police report of Oliver's alleged abuse and acknowledged knowing about the summarized report's existence for a week.

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APPENDIX B
PROJECT TIMELINE AND SCOPE OF WORK

APPENDIX B

Project timeline and scope of work

AFRICAN AMERICAN NETWORK FOR VIOLENCE FREE RELATIONSHIPS (ANFVR) MINISTRY PROJECT TIMELINE

| MONTH | DATES | ANFVR PROJECT ACTIVITY |
|--------------|------------------------------------|---|
| Feb. 2009 | 2/6 2/7 2/21 2/27 | e-vite sent to 87 persons paper invitation distributed at women of faith luncheon (50) Ad placed in Gamma Rho Sorority fund raiser souvenir booklet (the above are attachments to timeline) First meeting of African American Network held, attended by 12 |
| Mar. 2009 | 3/8 3/27 | e-vite sent for 3/27 meeting ANFVR monthly meeting/ community survey instrument to be introduced |
| Apr. 2009 | 4/2 4/4 4/11 4/23 4/24 | Participate on panel of faith leaders speaking to DV Shelter directors from all over Ca. Opportunity to invite African American shelter directors to join ANFVR Attend meeting of Ebony Prophets to encourage participation of UMC AA clergy Attended 2009 International Family Justice Center Conference Tuesday, April 21, 2009 - Thursday, April 23, 2009 in Anaheim, Ca. to network and consult with Ted Bunch co-founder of A Call To Men and with Dr. Oliver Williams founder and director of the Institute on Domestic Violence in the African American Community (IDVAAC) regarding the Network, the August Conference of IDVAAC and the October Seminar for ANFVR ANFVR monthly meeting |
| May 2009 | 5/2 5/21-22 5/22 | e-vite for monthly meeting to be sent 3 ANFVR members attending conference of A Call To Men in New York ANFVR monthly mtg |
| June 2009 | 6/13 6/18-20 6/26 | Brief presentation made to Long Beach chapter Jack and Jill of America Exhibit at California-Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church and make presentation to Ebony Prophets and Black Methodists for Church Renewal (BMCR) ANFVR monthly mtg. Schedule Focus group with Long Beach chapter of Negro Women |

| MONTH | DATES | ANFVR PROJECT ACTIVITY |
|------------|-------------------------|---|
| July 2009 | | <p>Create ANFVR logo Establish ANFVR website Raise funds through key organizations for scholarships for faith leaders and youth to attend August Conference of IDVAAC (18 \$79 Scholarships obtained) Prepare ANFVR posters for annual conference of Institute on Domestic Violence in African American Community Secure Site for October seminar</p> |
| Aug. 2009 | 8/3-4 8/1-31 8/28 | <p>Exhibit at Annual Conference of IDVAAC A Journey to Healing: Finding the Path (national event to be held in Long Beach at Westin Hotel) Co-facilitate workshop at conference on “Forgiveness and Letting Go” ANFVR to co-sponsor with local DV shelter a reception for Survivors and Faith Leaders ANFVR to survey conference attendees for regional info on DV and Faith ANFVR preparation for October Seminar—marketing, website promotion, press releases, radio and TV interviews if possible. August mtg. of ANFVR (teleconference)</p> |
| Sept. 2009 | * | <p>ANFVR preparation for October Seminar—marketing, website promotion, press releases, radio and TV interviews if possible. Information placed on ANFVR website for observation of October being DV Awareness Month Teleconference mtg of ANFVR for Sept. to be scheduled.</p> |
| Oct. 2009 | 10/17 | <p>“Calling All Men of Faith: A Day of Dialogue to End Violence Against Women” Seminar to be held at the Parr Conference Center at St. Mary’s Medical Center in Long Beach, California. Tony Porter, Co-founder of A Call To Men in New York, NY to be key note speaker and facilitator. ANFVR mtg. and Evaluation of event to be scheduled</p> |
| | | <p>At the February ANFVR meeting it was decided that in October (DV Awareness Month) on October 17th there will be a day long seminar entitled “Calling All Men of Faith” to be facilitated by Tony Porter of A Call To Men. This will create an opportunity for the male leadership of the ANFVR to reach out to their peers and have a day of knowledge transfer and bonding around ending gender-based violence against women and accountability for perpetrators of such violence.</p> <p>Through-out the above time period, there will be on-going distribution of community surveys, recruiting network members, strategic development of the network and shared responsibilities for capacity building. A Context Associate has been engaged to assist Primary Investigator with an evaluation</p> |

| MONTH | DATES | ANFVR PROJECT ACTIVITY |
|-------|-------|--|
| | | |
| | | of the group's process for the first six months. |

APPENDIX C
NETWORK LOGO, POSTERS AND NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD

APPENDIX C

NETWORK LOGO, POSTERS AND NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD

LOGO

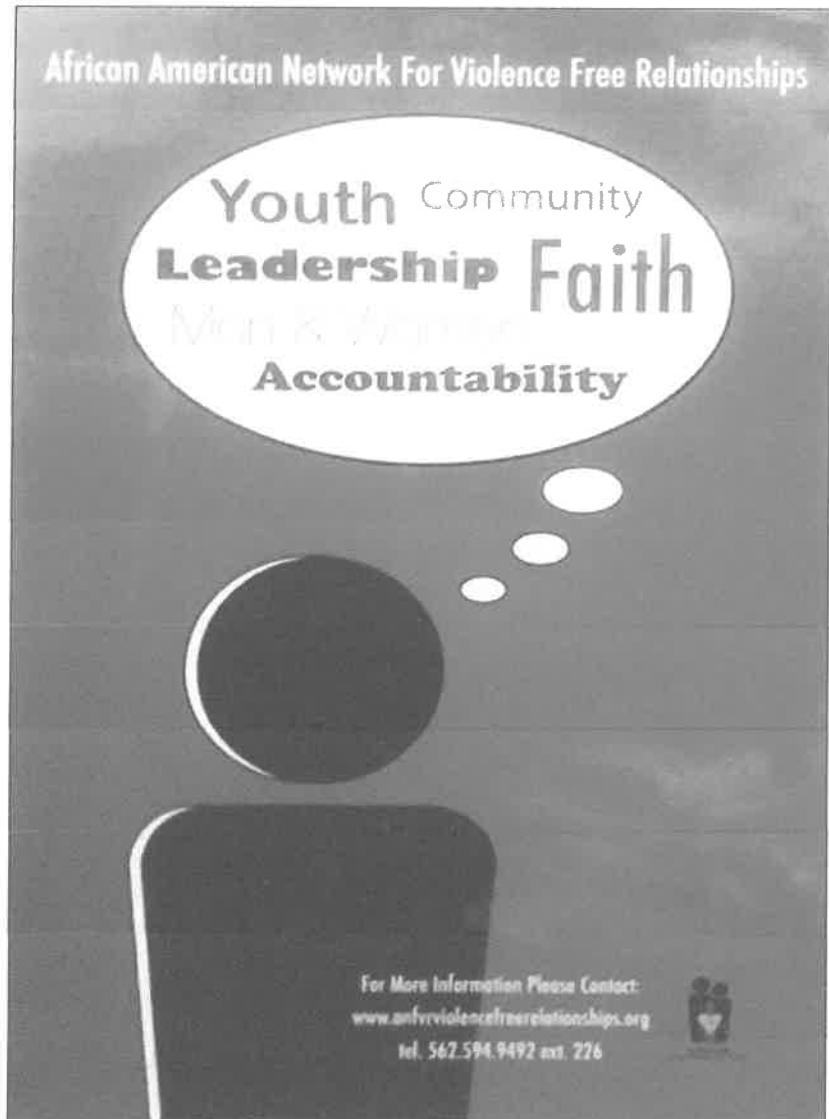
Two adults in Black, Child/Youth in Green, & Heart in Red

A family and community unified in peace



POSTER

What if we could all work together ?



POSTER

The African American Network For Violence Free Relationships

Who We Are:

The African American Network for Violence Free Relationships is a "network" of African American advocates, faith leaders, scholars and other professionals committed to addressing domestic violence in the African American Community.

Mission:

The African American Network for Violence Free Relationships is committed to promoting violence free relationships within the African American Community through education, advocacy and collaboration while encouraging leadership, moral and ethical accountability and culturally appropriate legislation, programs and services.

In the spirit of who we are and our mission, we invite you to join us for our monthly meetings.

For More Information Please Contact:

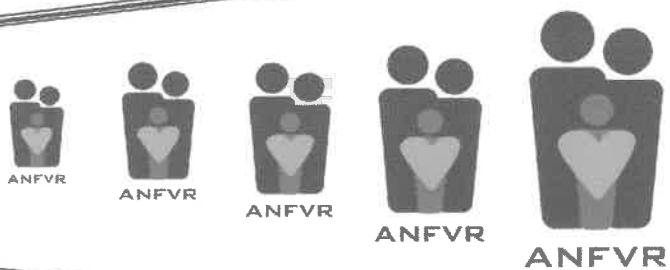
www.anfvfviolencefreerelationships.org
562.594.9482 ext. 220



NEWSLETTER MASTHEAD

Logos, lettering all in black, red and green

NETWORK NEWS!!!



African American Network For Violence Free Relationships

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION

APPENDIX D

EVALUATION

Evaluation (2 pages max)

- Please answer the following questions for any events held:

Long Beach Interfaith MLK Parade

of events projected/# of events achieved:

Target audience: Multicultural people along one mile parade route

Who actually attended:

Audience: all of the following— faith leaders, youth, adults, community service providers/constituents

Number: About 3000

Were the objectives of the event met? Yes, to create exposure for the Network

Would you do it again? Yes

Did you create new curricula? No (if so, please attach curriculum and training outline, as well as any identified learning objectives)

Did you use an existing curriculum? If so, please name: No

Did you collect evaluation data (pre-post tests, interviews, etc)? No

What outcome did you measure?

Survey results:

- Please answer the following questions for any events held:

Long Beach Interfaith MLK Community Fair

of events projected/# of events achieved:

Target audience: Multicultural community population visiting ANFVR Exhibit booth

Who actually attended:

Audience: all of the following— faith leaders, youth, adults, community service providers/constituents

Number: 200

Were the objectives of the event met? Yes, Increase knowledge about DV & to explain and promote the Network

Would you do it again? Yes

Did you create new curricula? No, but some flyers were new (see attached)

Did you use an existing curriculum? If so, please name: No

Did you collect evaluation data (pre-post tests, interviews, etc)? No

What outcome did you measure?

Survey results:

- Please answer the following questions for any events held:

California Pacific Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

of events projected/# of events achieved:

Target audience: Young adult and older Men and women of faith visiting ANFVR Exhibit booth over 4 days

Who actually attended:

Audience: all of the following— Pastors, Religious Educators, Lay Leaders, youth, adults,

Number: 500

Were the objectives of the event met? Yes, Increase knowledge about DV & faith & to explain and promote the Network

Would you do it again? Yes

Did you create new curricula? No, but some flyers were new (see attached)

Did you use an existing curriculum? If so, please name: No

Did you collect evaluation data (pre-post tests, interviews, etc)? yes, a survey

What outcome did you measure? Knowledge of DV victims, services available, role of the church

Survey results: Most people think church and clergy need to do more prevention and intervention.

- Please answer the following questions for any events held:

Ebony Prophets Annual Breakfast—Oral Presentation by Arnetha Inge & Mary Walton

of events projected/# of events achieved:

Target audience: African American United Methodist clergy, lay leaders and constituents

Who actually attended:

Audience: all of the following— clergy, laity.

Number: 65

Were the objectives of the event met? Yes, Increase knowledge about DV & to explain and promote the Network

Would you do it again? Yes

Did you create new curricula? No, but some flyers were new (see attached)

Did you use an existing curriculum? If so, please name: No

Did you collect evaluation data (pre-post tests, interviews, etc)? No

What outcome did you measure?

Survey results:

Please attach any copies of your pre/post surveys and any evaluation tools you used, including your final evaluation plan and any evaluation work you have already completed.

PRE AND POST TEST AND ANSWERS

A Domestic Violence Quiz For Teens

1. TRUE OR FALSE? Teenaged abusers will harass their victims.

- True
- False

2. TRUE OR FALSE? Teenaged abusers use intimidation to control their victims.

- True
- False

3. A teenaged abuser violates his victim's privacy by _____

- All of these
- Forces unwanted intimacy
- Going through victim's purse, locker, & bookbag at will
- Refuses to stop 'wrestling' when asked

4. A teenaged abuser may attempt to control his victim through _____

- threats to break up with victim
- threats of harm against victim, family and friends
- All of these
- threatening suicide if victim leaves or doesn't meet his demands

5. TRUE OR FALSE? A teenaged abuser uses "Male Privilege" to control his victim by acting as though he is the 'boss' and his word is law, telling her that men make all of the decisions, and demanding that she ask his permission to go somewhere or do something.

- True
- False

6. A teenaged abuser may limit his victim's independence by _____

- Insisting on making all decisions for the couple
- Controlling what she wears and how she looks
- All of these
- Pressuring her to use cigarettes, alcohol and drugs

7. Teenaged abusers use _____ to control their victims.

- Parties
- Humiliation
- Gifts
- Logic

8. A teenaged abuser may isolate his victim by _____

- Assigning her extra homework to keep her busy
- Pressuring her to choose between him and her family & friends
- Making her clean his room and keep her own home spotless
- Making her do exercises during her spare time to keep her in shape

9. Teen dating violence often is hidden because teenagers typically _____

- All of these

- want independence from parents
- are inexperienced with dating relationships
- have "romantic" views of love

10. TRUE OR FALSE? A teenaged VICTIM has nowhere to turn to for help in escaping her abuser.

- True
- False

ANSWERS TO A DOMESTIC VIOLENCE QUIZ FOR TEENS

1. TRUE OR FALSE? Teenaged abusers will harass their victims.

TRUE. Teenaged abusers will definitely harass their victims by following them around, frequently showing up uninvited, doing prank phone calls, spreading rumors about the victim, and trying to contact the victim after they have broken up.

2. TRUE OR FALSE? Teenaged abusers use intimidation to control their victims.

TRUE. He tries to scare his victim by screaming at her, smashing things, driving recklessly, and using threatening looks or gestures. He also threatens to get his victim in trouble with the victim's family, friends and school.

3. A teenaged abuser violates his victim's privacy by _____

ALL OF THESE. A teenaged abuser will violate his victim's privacy by going thru her purse, locker and bookbag without her permission, forcing himself sexually on her, refusing to stop 'wrestling' when asked, and reading incoming and outgoing notes of the victim.
In DV, there is NO such thing as privacy.

4. A teenaged abuser may attempt to control his victim through _____

ALL OF THESE. A teenaged abuser will threaten his victim in a variety of ways, such as: threats of physical harm against his victim, her family and friends, threats of suicide if she leaves him or doesn't do as he demands. The victim lives in a state of continuous fear that he will act out on any of these threats.

5. TRUE OR FALSE? A teenaged abuser uses "Male Privilege" to control his victim by acting as though he is the 'boss' and his word is law, telling her that men make all of the decisions, and demanding that she ask his permission to go somewhere or do something.

TRUE. A teenaged abuser, like his adult counterpart, feels that females are second class citizens at best and personal slaves at worst. It's his way or NO way and it is the victim's duty to ask his permission to go anywhere or do anything.

6. A teenaged abuser may limit his victim's independence by _____

ALL OF THESE. The teenaged abuser will tell his victim what she can and cannot wear, criticize her makeup and hairstyle, pressure her into 'being cool like him' by using cigarettes, alcohol and/or drugs and insist on making all of the decisions for the relationship.

7. Teenaged abusers use _____ to control their victims.

HUMILIATION. Teenaged abusers use humiliation of their victims to maintain their control over

them, such as: calling them bad names in public and private, putting down or making fun of victim's race, religion, social class, and/or her family, grabbing her inappropriately in front of others and showing her personal items to others (feminine hygiene, etc.)

8. A teenaged abuser may isolate his victim by _____

PRESSURING HER TO CHOOSE BETWEEN HIM AND HER FAMILY & FRIENDS. A teenaged abuser will also pressure his victim to quit her job and extra-curricular activities.

9. Teen dating violence often is hidden because teenagers typically _____

ALL OF THESE. Teenagers are not very experienced with dating relationships, desperately want independence from parental control, and have unrealistically 'romantic' views of love and are pressured by their peers towards violence. They don't comprehend the complexities of dating, love, or domestic violence.

10. TRUE OR FALSE? A teenaged VICTIM has nowhere to turn to for help in escaping her abuser.

FALSE. A teenaged victim can call the National Domestic Violence Hotline (24/7) at 1-800-799-SAFE(7233). There ARE resources for teens in many cities, some through shelters (counseling and advice). Teenaged victims are highly advised to TELL their parents, teacher, counselors and principals and get help! There IS help for teenaged victims.

Adult Domestic Violence Quiz I

1. Domestic Violence is comprised of 2 components: physical & emotional abuse.

- True
- False

2. The key to recovering from Domestic Violence is rebuilding one's self-esteem.

- True
- False

3. Domestic Violence victims are subjected to a form of brainwashing by their abusers.

- True
- False

4. Intimidation is part of the physical abuse component of Domestic Violence.

- True
- False

5. An abuser has the right to have intimate contact with his victim whenever he wishes.

- True
- False

6. A battered woman may be able to change her Social Security Number so her abuser cannot track her (U.S. only).

- True
- False

7. Battered women are not susceptible to PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).

- True
- False

8. Battered women can experience 'flashbacks' of past abuse.

- True
- False

9. There is no escape for battered women.

- True
- False

10. Domestic Violence only happens in poor minority families in the U.S.

- True

False

11. Putting a victim on a financial allowance and not allowing her to access money is a form of emotional abuse.

- True
- False

12. An abuser feels that he is "King of his own castle" due to his own lack of self-esteem.

- True
- False

13. Domestic Violence doesn't affect the children raised with it.

- True
- False

14. Only women can be victims of Domestic Violence.

- True
- False

15. Once a victim leaves her abuser, she's safe forever from him.

- True
- False

Answers to Adult Domestic Violence Quiz I

1. Domestic Violence is comprised of 2 components; physical & emotional abuse.
False. Domestic Violence is comprised of 3 components; physical, emotional and sexual abuse.

2. The key to recovering from Domestic Violence is rebuilding one's self-esteem.
True. Through Domestic Violence counseling, a traumatized self-esteem can be rebuilt to enable the victim to regain her feelings of self worth and self confidence through the rebuilding of her self-esteem. As a result, she will enable herself to become empowered and successfully break her Cycle of Abuse.

3. Domestic Violence victims are subjected to a form of brainwashing by their abusers.
True. An abuser will tell his victim anything to keep her under his thumb and control, such as "You're too fat/stupid/ugly for any other man to want you!" "You're a terrible wife! Look at this filthy house!" "You dumb &()_&^&!" The more he tells his victim these things, the more she will believe it as the truth.

4. Intimidation is part of the physical abuse component of Domestic Violence.
False. Intimidation, such as threatening gestures or threats of any kind, is considered part of emotional abuse as with threats only there is no physical contact.

5. An abuser has the right to have intimate contact with his victim whenever he wishes.
False. That is considered Marital Rape and is a crime in many U.S. states. It is a form of sexual abuse.

6. A battered woman may be able to change her Social Security Number so her abuser cannot track her (U.S. only).
True. The Social Security Administration DOES permit a battered woman to change her social security number under certain circumstances to prevent her abuser from locating her. She will NOT lose benefits she has earned from her old number. They will be transferred to her new number.

7. Battered women are not susceptible to PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder).
False. Battered women ARE able to be diagnosed with PTSD due to prolonged physical, emotional and/or sexual abuse. This is a treatable condition through medications and therapy.

8. Battered women can experience 'flashbacks' of past abuse.

True. Battered women can and do experience flashbacks. These are vivid re-enactments of past abuse where the victims relive the pain, the terror, the entire abuse scenario along with all of the emotions that go along with it.

9. There is no escape for battered women.

False. Throughout the U.S. there is a network of battered women's shelters which will provide shelter, clothing, food, job training, job referrals, counseling and childcare for free to their residents.

10. Domestic Violence only happens in poor minority families in the U.S.

False. Domestic Violence is no respector of persons. It strikes the rich, the poor and the middle classed. It doesn't care about race. It strikes African-Americans, Asian, Native American and Caucasian families, whether American born or foreign born. It happens in every religion known to man.

11. Putting a victim on a financial allowance and not allowing her to access money is a form of emotional abuse.

True. This is called Financial Abuse and is part of emotional abuse. Other parts of Financial Abuse include; taking her entire paycheck if he ALLOWS her to work, causing scenes or harassing her at work to force her to quit or be fired, not allowing her to have a job, etc.

12. An abuser feels that he is "King of his own castle" due to his own lack of self-esteem.

True. Abusers and victims of Domestic Violence share the characteristic of low self-esteem. Abusers feel that they must be the King of the Castle in order to be 'true men' and act in that fashion as well. Abusers feel that they MUST control every move that their victims make and must know where their victims are at all time in order to control them. It's the abuser's way or no way. If she doesn't comply with his demands, abuse can and will result.

13. Domestic Violence doesn't affect the children raised with it.

False. Children are deeply affected by Domestic Violence. They are fearful and will feel guilty because they can't 'save mommy' due to the fact of their own fear or simply because they are too small to be effective. Boys raised in domestically violent homes can become abusers, while girls can be primed to become future battered women without proper intervention.

14. Only women can be victims of Domestic Violence.

False. Males can be victims also, regardless of sexual orientation. Women can also be abusers. The Battered Men's Movement is still in its infancy and the public is in need of education concerned male victims. There are a few male shelters in the U.S., but this movement still has a long way to go in order to make the public aware of battered men.

15. Once a victim leaves her abuser, she's safe forever from him.

False. The abuser becomes enraged when he discovers his victim has escaped and will stalk her and search for her everywhere he can until he finds her. He will then usually cry and plead with her to come back. If that doesn't work, he'll threaten and attempt to intimidate her. If that still doesn't work, then he may well resort to "Separation Violence" which is, by far, more vicious and malicious than his violence in the past and may result in hospitalization or even death for the victim.

Persons given the quiz were allowed to keep their quiz and an answer sheet so that they would have the information for future reference.

These quizzes have been obtained from the website of Fun Trivia

http://www.funtrivia.com/quizzes/sci_tech/psychology/domestic_violence.html

APPENDIX E

SURVEY

APPENDIX E
SURVEY

Community Survey (Individual)
African American Network For Violence-Free Relationships
(ANFVR)
Domestic Violence Prevention & Intervention Among African American Neighborhoods in
Greater Long Beach, South Los Angeles , Orange, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties

Please take a few minutes from your busy schedule to complete the following survey. Your answers to the questions will help us determine how we will begin to create a culture of peace to help our community prevent family/relationship violence, better serve domestic violence victims and create domestic violence services with respect for African American culture and traditions. Domestic Violence/Intimate Partner Violence and Family Violence can mean the same thing in this survey. **(Please read domestic violence definitions carefully before you complete this survey)**

DEFINITIONS OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE/FAMILY VIOLENCE

Domestic violence refers to a pattern of violent and forced behavior done by one adult or teenager in an intimate relationship to another. Domestic violence may consist of repeated, severe beatings, or less noticeable forms of abuse including threats, and controlling behavior, destruction of personal property such as cloths and keepsakes, stalking, constant phone or text messaging, abuse of pet animals. Domestic violence is not "marital conflict," "mutual abuse," "a lover's quarrel," or "a private family matter."

Statistics show that 95% of domestic violence victims are women, although men can also be victims.

PHYSICAL ASSAULT: Includes shoving, pushing, holding, hitting or kicking. Physical assaults may occur all the time or once in a while, but in many cases they tend to get more serious and more often over time.

SEXUAL ASSAULT: Any time one partner forces sexual acts which are unwanted by the other partner of opposite or same sex.

EMOTIONAL/MENTAL/PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSAULT: Includes isolation from family and friends, forced financial dependence, verbal, and emotional abuse, stalking, threats, intimidation, and control over where the partner can go and what she/he can do.

ATTACKS AGAINST PROPERTY AND PETS: Destruction of property which may include household objects or treasured objects belonging to the victim, hitting the walls, or abusing or killing beloved pets.

Who We Are: The African American Network for Violence Free Relationships is a “network” of African American advocates, faith leaders, scholars and other professionals committed to addressing domestic violence in the African American Community.

Mission: The African American Network for Violence Free Relationships is committed to promoting violence free relationships within the African American Community through education, advocacy and collaboration while encouraging leadership, moral & ethical accountability and culturally appropriate legislation, programs and services.

Please check (✓) all that apply. I am:

(GENDER)

Male Female Transgender

(RELATIONSHIP STATUS)

Married Single Separated Divorced Dating
Same sex relationship Living together Widowed/Widower

(RACIAL IDENTIFICATION)

Black/African American African Caribbean Mixedrace, Black Identified

(OCCUPATIONAL STATUS)

Employed Unemployed Homemaker Retired Student

(AGE RANGE) (13-17) (18-25) (26-55) (Over 55)

1. Do you know any women who are or have been victims of domestic violence?

Yes No If yes, check all that apply:

Physical Emotional Mental Sexual Pets Property

2. Do you know any men who are or have been victims of domestic violence?

Yes No If yes, check all that apply:

Physical Emotional Mental Sexual Pets Property

3. If you saw or heard domestic violence, would you choose to get involved or not?

Yes No If no, why not? _____

4. Do you think you know enough about domestic violence to help yourself or someone else? Yes No

If no, what type information would be helpful to you? _____

5. Would you come to a meeting in your neighborhood to discuss domestic violence as a community problem. Yes No

If no, why not? _____

6. Are you a person of faith? Yes No Please circle all that apply.
I am Jewish Christian Muslim Buddhist New Age/Thought Atheist
Other, please specify _____
If you are Christian, what is your denomination? _____

7. Do you believe religious belief plays a role—positive or negative—in abusive relationships? If so, what role?

8. Do you think religious leaders are prepared to assist victims or perpetrators of intimate partner abuse?
Yes No If no, in your opinion, what can they do to become prepared

**A.N.F.V.R. THANKS YOU FOR YOUR PART IN CREATING A CULTURE OF PEACE
IN YOUR FAMILY, THE AFRICAN AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOODS AND OUR
GREATER COMMUNITY.**

This survey is underwritten and sponsored by CASE Interfaith Project, a program of
Interval House Crisis Shelters

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